



REGIMENTAL BIOGRAPHY  
*of the*  
TWENTY-FIRST ENGINEERS  
LIGHT RAILWAY-A-E-F-



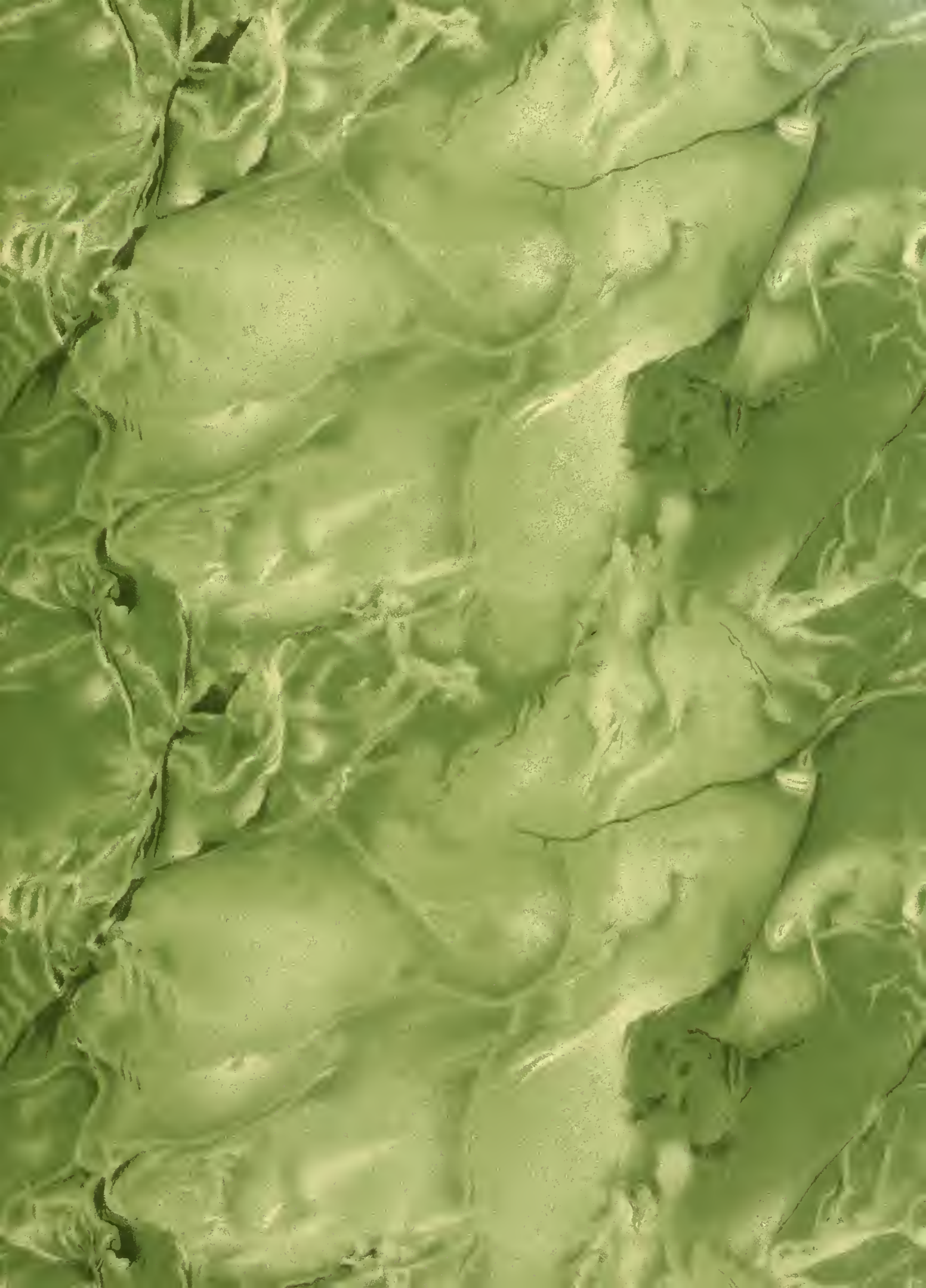


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REGIMENTAL BIOGRAPHY  
OF THE  
21st ENGINEERS (LIGHT RAILWAY)

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New York

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PRINTED BY  
THE MCCONNELL PRINTING COMPANY  
NEW YORK

OCT -8 1919



# Dedication

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Respectfully dedicated to the  
memory of Lt. Colonel Slifer,  
“Our Old Man,” and those of  
his boys who shall never return

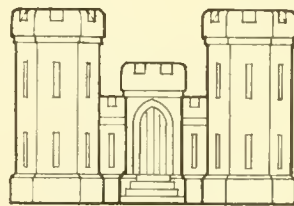




AN  
HISTORICAL & TECHNICAL  
BIOGRAPHY *of the*  
TWENTY-FIRST ENGINEERS,  
*Light Railway.*  
UNITED STATES ARMY.

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*Presenting their part in the*  
WORLD WAR.



COMPILED AND EDITED  
*by the* REGIMENT.  
1919

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## Prologue

*When Knights of Old their battles fought,  
And Poets strove their tales to tell;  
Bethink you, while the Knight in Glory fought,  
The Poet in shirt sleeves worked like—well,  
He worked, and sung, and finally wrote a book.  
Though this book shows no great poetic strain,  
The Editors have by hook and crook  
Gathered the Dope and worked with might and main.*

*And while we slaved we couldn't help but feel  
The responsibility of our undertaken work.  
'T was up to us to in this book reveal  
The deeds of men who did and did not shirk.  
And in this book, dear reader, we have tried  
To do them justice, those who for Country toil  
On battlefields; some wounded, some died;  
And now their bodies rest in France's soil.*

*But if by labor we can implant  
Some monument upon the Roads of Time,  
To which the soldier like a Pilgrim bent  
May look, and feel the spark sublime  
Of recurring memories of that not far distant day  
When Duty called, Adventure beckoned  
And no choice was left but to obey.  
If, as I say, we can keep alive that flame  
We'll feel our labors have not been in vain.*





## FOREWORD



HIS Historical Biography has been written as a monument to the work of the 21st Regiment Engineers in France. It is intended in this book to portray and describe as completely as possible its many achievements, something of the difficulties surmounted and to show what a necessary asset a narrow gauge unit is to modern warfare.

After the signing of the armistice and the close of hostilities, the men of the regiment began to think about returning to their homes, to again take up the work they had left upon their entry into the army. Then also came the thought that the regiment would be demobilized and with it would go all the incidents and many happenings of interest to all the men of the command. Nothing would be left but a vague memory of the 21st Engineers' work in the great conflict. It seemed a mistake to allow so much valuable data, both technical and historical, gained by hard labor and experience, to be cast aside in a moment and perhaps be lost forever. Too, every man wanted some memento to keep as a reminder, lest they forget old time's and old friends, as well as to have some concrete evidence of their experiences on light railways in the combat area. Thus, this biography had its conception. It was thought that only a book could and would answer the purpose. Authorized by the commanding officer, the work was started and the staff designated to compile the contents were soon engulfed with stories, poems, cartoons and articles of interest contributed by various individuals of the unit. The large variety of the data submitted gave the editors a liberal field to select from; and this enabled them to insert into the book what is considered some of the best stories on American activities in the Toul and Argonne Sectors. The interest displayed by all has been, without a doubt, the most important factor in its compilation. Making this book a mark of credit to the regiment was the one idea that became paramount, as the work progressed and neared completion.

Each company and the many detachments have their own history separate from the Battalions and Regiment. This was considered necessary owing to the fact that so much detail was required to cover the activities of the various companies, distributed as they were so widely throughout the several campaigns. It was thought a general history alone would have a tendency to detract from the companies individual achievement. The intentions of the book were to slight no one.

Therefore, in reading these narratives it is believed that they will bring back to every man some memory worth

while, of something accomplished, something of the joys, the discomforts and hardships so common in the army, and something of life as it was found in France. It should afford them no little satisfaction to read of the achievements of the regiment while it served with the first American army, with the realization of their own part played, however humble it might have been.

Parallel events of importance have caused some repetitions which we have deemed necessary to include; which we have endeavored, however, to present from the varying viewpoints of the several departments.

The many scenes of the regiment's wide scope of operation have been described by stories, historical data, and to a great extent by photographs taken by the staff photographer from the chief engineer's office and from private collections. This collection of photographs is considered one of the finest of its kind. It is well to state that a great deal of our activities around the front are not portrayed by photographs. The reason for this was that during the offensives no individual cameras were allowed, and although there were many pictures taken by the signal corps, they are not available to us at this time. On this account most of the pictures show the work in the back areas and do not give an idea of the full scope of the regiment's operations.

Special articles on the work of light railways in connection with war strategy together with construction and reconnaissance are some of the most important stories of the book. They deal with the numerous movements of the American Forces in both the Toul and Argonne Sectors following up the combat forces and explaining the great things accomplished there. This work is very clearly pictured on special maps which the regiment prepared to facilitate liaison with the army units during the drives. These maps have been reproduced from the originals and placed here in the history. They show the layout of the numerous arteries of narrow gauge track running toward the front, including a number of lines captured from the Germans. There is no question but what these articles are worthy of mention as they explain fully and intelligently the reason for narrow gauge railways, and the assistance they lend to the artillery and other organizations and how road traffic and congestion are relieved, thereby releasing a large number of motor trucks which might be used for other purposes.

The technical section contains a number of articles contributed by the men who participated actively in the construction, maintenance and operation of light railway

which it is believed will prove of much interest. This section also covers our work in the S. O. S. and the construction of the L. R. Central shops. It tells how rolling stock was assembled and sent forward for service, and describes the organization charged with upkeep of motive power and equipment so vital to operation. Following through the biography are many other stories embracing most of the regiment's activities in France and are so arranged to allow the reader to follow from one event to another without losing the real theme of the work. They offer much more detail than was anticipated when the history was first started, the cancellation of early sailing orders allowing the staff to incorporate data which would not have been obtainable otherwise.

It has been the honest endeavor of the editor to eliminate any unjust criticism or such that could not be substantiated and where criticism does occur it is intended as construction rather than destruction and incorporated with a view of explaining the difficulties met and solved, which in future could be used for reference and study of the peculiar problems of light railway operation.

The life of the soldier is portrayed by cartoons, showing the semi-tragic and humorous sides of the army. These in conjunction with the funny stories, poems and

odes offer the average soldier's sentiments regarding military discipline.

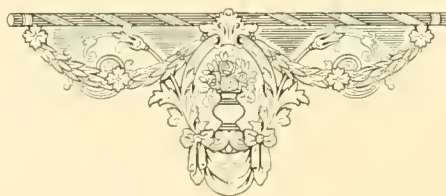
Accounts of hazardous undertakings and experiences under shellfire, are as written or related by the men who went through the experiences.

To all knowledge of the editors and those who have passed on this biography all stories and other articles set down in the contents have taken place. Nothing has been assumed, and we fully believe and consider this history to be a truthful and authentic account of the various adventures and achievements of the regiment.

The death of Lieut. Colonel H. J. Slifer occurred as this history was being compiled. He being so large a figure in the success of the 21st Engineers, his loss was keenly felt. This book has been dedicated as a tribute to him and those of his boys who will not return.

The editors, in behalf of the regiment, wish to thank the officers and men for their earnest work and contributions to the book. On account of the limited space many articles had to be curtailed and in some cases eliminated. Nevertheless we wish to express our appreciation to each and every man who has contributed toward making the book the success, this we hope it to be.

THE EDITORS.





# Lieutenant-Colonel Hiram J. Slifer

Chaplain Francis K. Little



**H**IRAM J. SLIFER, Lieutenant-Colonel and father of the 21st Regiment of Engineers, a man of many noble qualities and excellent gifts, was respected, admired and loved by all who served with him. This book, which aims to be a faithful record of a work and life over which he presided and in which he was the outstanding and most interesting figure, is offered in genuine humility and love as an imperfect but not unfitting tribute to his memory.

Although sixty years of age, when the youth of America began its crusade against a mighty revival of barbarism, Colonel Slifer was among the first to volunteer and be accepted for service. His place was with the youth of the world. Despite the encroaching years, life was still a great adventure; a noble cause fanned his enthusiasm to a roaring flame, and there was in him an unusual capacity for self-forgetfulness and sacrifice which often fell little short of prodigality. He had passed the ambush of young days, the dull, prosaic middle years, yet his ideals were fresh and strong, and belonged peculiarly to the springtime of life. He recognized no limits to his capacity for work and endurance. The hardships of war were accepted as a matter of course. It was often suggested to him that he might spare himself without detriment to the service, but these suggestions he quietly ignored. Apparently unconscious that even industry must pay tribute to advancing years, he was steadily and always working at a pace with which younger men could not keep up without extraordinary efforts. The passing years had left their marks upon his person, but in all things of the spirit he was as young as any man in the regiment.

Though this persistent youthfulness was a striking

quality of the man, there was also a force of mind and character which showed plainly that sixty years rich in experience had not been passed in vain. He was youthful, beautifully so, nevertheless a fine example for ripe manhood, strong and intelligent. He commanded that force of will which binds various elements together into a whole and surmounting obstacles drives a difficult task to successful completion. In two great American offensives, he had actual command in the field of all light railway operations. The task of constructing and operating these roads was a difficult one. In the peculiar circumstances success depended upon character as well as knowledge and experience. It was Colonel Slifer's masterly will together with his wide knowledge and long experience of railroad work which finally crowned the labors of the regiment with so large a measure of success that it called forth many expressions of appreciation from the higher authorities.

His fine intelligence showed itself in ways too numerous to mention here, but in none more strikingly than the excellent tact he showed in dealing with the officers and men who worked under him. His requirements were high and hard to fulfill, his own indefatigable industry was his standard for others. He was severe on those whose work did not measure up to what he expected, and he had little patience even for the most plausible excuse. On the other hand he took pains to know his men well, and judged accurately what they could do best. He was fond of them and knew how to be a good friend. The result was that among officers and men it was universally agreed that they would rather take a "bawling out" from the "Old Man" than a compliment from any other officer in the army. No doubt this attitude on the part of the offi-



cers and men was due somewhat to the power and attractiveness inherent in the Colonel's unusual personality, but not all; it was mainly the result of an intelligent management of men.

The spirit of youth combined with the strong will and keen intelligence of ripe manhood, such was our Lieutenant-Colonel as we knew him and loved him. He was born October 12, 1857, in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, and received his early education in the public schools of Philadelphia. He graduated from the Polytechnic College of Pennsylvania with the degree of Mechanical Engineer, then began a long and varied career as an engineer, in the course of which he served with a large number of the best known railroads in the United States, and so gained an intimate knowledge of railroad work in all its various phases. To record here a list of the prominent positions he held with various corporations would extend this short account beyond its proper limits. It is sufficient to say that when on August 15, 1917, he was commissioned Major in the Engineer section of the Officers Reserve Corps, he brought to the service of his country the fruit of a rich and varied experience in all departments of railroad work, and an executive ability which had been tested over and over again in positions of the largest responsibility.

On Sept. 20, 1917, Major Slifer was assigned to the 21st Regiment of Engineers, Light Railway, and a few days later was commissioned Lieutenant-Colonel. For two or three months he was occupied with preliminary work, selecting men, developing the organization, but by the middle of January the regiment had arrived in France and was ready to carry on its destined work. After a few weeks in the region of the Service of Supply doing important work, the regiment was moved to Sorey (Meuse), the headquarters of the American Light Railways in the Advance Zone. Colonel Slifer was made Chief Engineer of the Light Railways, operated by the 21st Engineers, and formulated plans of construction, maintenance, and operation which later proved of inestimable value. In July he was busily engaged on a light railway system to

serve the American Sector to the south of Luneville, and returned to Sorey just in time to complete preparations for the great St. Mihiel Offensive. During these stirring days, he was at his office or in the field working from twelve to eighteen hours out of every twenty-four.

The first great American Offensive was barely over before the second had begun. On October 12, the 21st Engineers were moved from Sorey to Vraincourt in order to maintain and operate the light railway during what has come to be known as the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. The combatant railways in this sector were in a deplorable condition and practically no service was being given to the organizations in the line. By November 1st, a remarkable amount of work had been accomplished, and large quantities of ammunition, rations, and other supplies were being carried by the light railway lines to within one mile of the front lines throughout the whole sector. This was the work of Colonel Slifer. From the first of November to the thirteenth he was constantly with his men in the most trying and dangerous circumstances, and it was due to him above all others that the Service of Supply bore up under the strain in the Advance Zone.

On November 13th, he was thrown from a light railway motor and in addition to a severe shock, suffered a fractured arm. The strain of the past months began to tell upon him and pneumonia set in. His robust constitution withstood this attack, but as he was slow to recover full strength, a medical board recommended that he be sent home. In order to say good-bye to his officers and men, he traveled from Cannes in the South of France to Conflans, Meurthe et Moselle. This journey was too much for his reduced strength. He was seized with a second attack of pneumonia and died on February third.

We buried him in the American Cemetery, Aulnois, Meuse, which is situated on a hill overlooking our former camp at Sorey Gare, and placed a simple stone cross to mark the spot. His lasting monuments are the victory for which he labored so ardently and the devotion of all who served with him.

"He was a man, take him for all in all,  
I shall not look upon his like again."





*Cemetery at Abainville*

## In Memoriam

Lieut. Colonel Hiram J. Slifer, Commanding Officer of the 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of bronchial pneumonia in Base Hospital No. 1, Neufschateau, France, Feb. 3, 1919, and was buried with full Military honors in Grave No. 115, American Military Cemetery, No. 777 in the Commune of Vertusey, District of Commercy, Dept. of Meuse, France, Feb. 5, 1919.

Lieut. Col. Slifer was born Oct. 12, 1857 and was commissioned Major, Corps of Engrs., in August, 1917, and was recommissioned Lieut. Colonel in October, 1917.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Mary Slifer (wife), resides at 6227 Dorchester Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

Chester H. Plimpton, 1st Lieut. of Company F, 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., was killed in action by concussion from explosion of shell from enemy artillery fire, near Thiacourt (Meuse), Sept. 27, 1918, and was buried with full Military Honors in Grave No. 71, American Military Cemetery No. 777, in the Commune of Vertusey District of Commercy, Dept. of Meuse, France, Sept. 29, 1918.

Lieut. Plimpton was born March 2, 1893, and was commissioned 1st Lieut. Corps of Engineers, Jan. 7, 1918.

His nearest relative, Mrs. George A. Plimpton (Mother), resides at 52 East Swan Street, Buffalo, N. Y.

Hunter McClure, 1st Lieutenant of Company N, 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of Cerebro Spinal Meningitis in Base Hospital No. 66, at Neuf-Chateau (Vosges), Sept. 26, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 30, American Military Cemetery No. 4, Neufchateau (Vosges), France, Sept. 27, 1918.

Lieut. McClure was born Dec. 23, 1887, and was commissioned 1st Lieutenant, Corps of Engineers, July 20, 1917.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Josephine Harris

(sister), resides at 34 Highland Ave., Piedmont, Cal.

John C. Gates, Private of Company A, 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died from causes unknown aboard the U.S.S. "President Grant," Jan. 5, 1918, and was buried at sea with full military honors the same date. Pvt. Gates was born Aug. 28, 1892, and enlisted in the Engineers at Columbus Barracks, Ohio, Sept. 9, 1917.

His nearest relative, Mr. Isaac Gates (father) resides at 239 East 11th St., Tyrone, Penna.

Harry G. Wirstrom, Private of Company B, 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of pneumonia in Camp Hospital, No. 52, at Le Mans (Sarthe), France, April 3, 1919, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 19, Section A, Plot 20, American Military Cemetery at Le Mans (Sarthe), France, April 4, 1919.

Pvt. Wirstrom was born Nov. 25, 1899 and enlisted in the Engineers at Columbus Barracks, Ohio, Sept. 25, 1917.

His nearest relative, Mr. Carl Wirstrom (father), resides at 1367 East 66th St., Cleveland, Ohio.

Clifford J. Van Frank, Private of Company B, 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of bronchial pneumonia in Camp Hospital No. 52, at Le Mans (Sarthe), France, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 9, Section A, Plot 20, American Military Cemetery at Le Mans (Sarthe), France, April 6, 1919.

Pvt. Van Frank was born March 5, 1887, and enlisted in the Engineers at Columbus Barracks, Ohio, Sept. 22, 1917.

His nearest relative, Miss Anna Van Frank (sister), resides at 2595 Eastern Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio.

Charles J. Reilly, Sergeant of Company C, 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., was killed in action by shrapnel from explosion of enemy air-



plane bomb at Sorey Gare (Meuse), France, Sept. 16, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 59, American Military Cemetery No. 777 in the Commune of Vertusey District of Commercy Dept. of Meuse, France, Sept. 18, 1918.

Sergt. Reilly was born Sept. 10, 1887, and enlisted in the Engineers at Toledo, Ohio, Sept. 21, 1917.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Mary O'Connor (grandmother), resides at 1519 West Broadway, Louisville, Kentucky.

Edward F. Rank, Private of Company "C", 21st Engineers, L.R., was accidentally killed in 60-cm gauge railway wreck, west of Buxieres (Meuse) France, Oct. 5, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 78, American Military Cemetery No. 777, in the Commune of Vertusey, District of Commercy, Dept. of Meuse, France, Oct. 7, 1918.

Private Rank was born October 31, 1891, and enlisted in the Engineers at Detroit, Mich., Nov. 21, 1917.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Charles Rank (mother), resides at 207 Maidstone St., Detroit, Mich.

Grover L. Case, Private of Company "C", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., was accidentally killed by falling under the wheels of moving train near Audun Le-Roman (Meurthe et Moselle), December 13, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 113, American Military Cemetery No. 777, in the Commune of Vertusey, District of Commercy, Dept. of Meuse, France, Dec. 15, 1918.

Private Case was born Feb. 3, 1893 and enlisted in the Engineers at Saginaw, Mich., Sept. 20, 1917.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Lillie Case (mother) resides at 1703 Union St., Saginaw, Mich.

George T. Higgins, Private of Company "C", 21st Regiment Engi-

neers L.R., was killed by an unknown person near the railroad tunnel at Auboe (Meurthe et Moselle) March 8, 1919, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 118, Am. Mil. Cem. No. 777, in the Commune of Vertusey, Dist. of Commercy, Dept. of Meuse, France, Mar. 10, 1919. Pvt. Higgins was born Mar. 25, 1894, and enlisted in the Engineers at St. Louis, Mo., May 29, 1917. Nearest relative, Mrs. Cora B. Higgins (mother), resides at Gilman City, Mo.

P. H. Gallagher, Pvt. of Co. "C", 21st Reg. Eng., L.R., died of bronchial pneumonia in Evacuation Hosp. No. 18 at Briey (Meurthe et Moselle) and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 92, Plot 3, Am. Mil. Cem. at Briey (Meurthe et Moselle), France, Mar. 27, 1919. Pvt. Gallagher enlisted in the Engineers at St. Paul, Minn., Sept. 24, 1917. Nearest relative, Mrs. Patrick Gallagher (mother), resides So. St. Paul, Minn.

F. W. Berner, Pvt. of Co. "C", died Apr. 2, 1919, at Am. Hosp., Toul. Cause of death influenza, scarlet fever and bronchial pneumonia. Buried in Am. Mil. Cem., Toul. Nearest relative, Mr. Berner (his father), Jamestown, N. D.

John P. Vanderdoes, Pvt. 1st Cl. of Co. "D", 21st Reg. Eng., L.R., was killed by accidental explosion of a one pound shell at Neuf Etang (Meur-

the et Moselle), France, Sept. 27, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 70, Am. Mil. Cemetery No. 777 in the Commune of Vertusey, District of Commercy, Dept. of Meuse, France, Sept. 29, 1918.

Pvt. Vanderdoes was born July 30, 1888, and enlisted in the Engineers at New York, N. Y., Sept. 11, 1917.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Susie Dougan (mother), resides at 72 Barrow St., New York City, N. Y.

Frank W. Cochran, Private of Company "D", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of Cerebro Spinal meningitis in Base Hospital 9 at Chat-



*Grave of Lieut. Col. H. J. Slifer*

teroux (Indre), France, Jan. 28, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in grave 18, American Military Cemetery No. 31 (St. Dennis French Cemetery), Chat-  
teroux (Indre), France, Jan 29, 1918.

Private Cochrane was born Jan. 22, 1892.

His nearest relative, W. F. Cochrane (Uncle), resides at 374 Livingston St., St. Paul, Minn.

Wilbert Fox, Private of Company "D," 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of Lobar Pneumonia in Evacuation Hospital No. 18, Briey (Meurthe et Moselle), Feb. 17, 1919, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 117, American Military Cemetery No. 777 in the Commune of Vertusey, District of Commercy, Dept. of Meuse, France, Feb. 19, 1919.

Private Fox was born Oct. 19, 1894 and enlisted in the Engineers at Rogers, Mich., Sept. 21, 1917.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Alice Fox (mother), resides at 723 Carrie St., Soo, Mich.

Loreo Parent, Private of Company "E", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of pneumonia in Evacuation Hospital No. 18 at Briey (Meurthe et Moselle), France, Feb. 5, 1919 and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 116, American Military Cemetery No. 777 in the commune of Vertusey, District of Commercy, Dept. of Meuse, France, Feb. 7, 1918.

Private Parent was born Sept. 18, 1891 and enlisted in the Engineers at Marquette, Mich., Nov. 22, 1917.

His nearest relative, Henry Parent (father), resides at 221 Seamore Ave., Marquette, Mich.

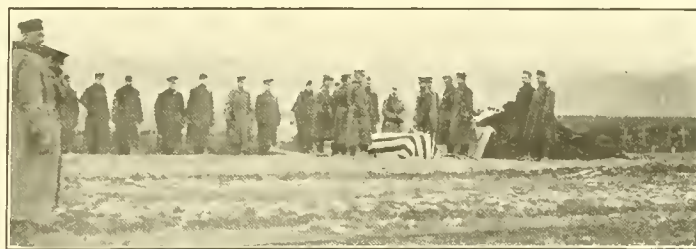
Jesse T. Ritchie, Private of Company "E", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., was killed in action by shell fragments from the explosion of enemy shell which made a direct hit on the 60 cm Railway Engine he was running near Marcq (Ardennes), France, Nov. 1, 1918 and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 4, Plot 1, (Ardennes), France, Nov. 2, 1918.

Private Ritchie was born Nov. 23, 1893 and enlisted in the Engineers at Fort Bliss, Texas, Sept. 18, 1917.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Mary Ritchie (mother) resides at Gallup, N. Mex.

Edward M. Dias, Horseshoer of Company "E", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of Peritonitis in hospital at Toul, Sept. 29, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 252, American Military Cemetery at Toul (Meurthe et Moselle) France, Oct. 1, 1918.

Horseshoer Dias was born March 27, 1894, and enlisted in the Engineers at Fort McDowell,



*Funeral Ceremony of Lieut. Col. Slifer*

Cal., Sept. 29, 1917.

His nearest relative Miss Emma Dias (sister) resides at 325 Twenty-third Ave., San Francisco, Cal.

Eugene M. Schwartz, Private of Company "E",

21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of bronchial pneumonia in hospital at Rimacourt (Hts.-Marne), France, Oct. 28, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 254, American Military Cemetery at Rimacourt (Haute-Marne), France, Oct. 27, 1918.

Private Schwartz was born June 24, 1890 and enlisted in the Engineers at Fort McDowell, Cal., Sept. 29, 1917.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Ida Schwartz (mother) resides at 711 Pleasant St., Boulder, Cal.

Marvin A. O'Neal, Private of Company "F", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of pneumonia at sea on board the U.S.S. "President Grant," Dec. 31, 1917, and was buried with full military honors at sea on the same date.

Private O'Neal enlisted in the Engineers at Alexandria, La., Sept. 26, 1917.

His nearest relative Mrs. A. G. O'Neal (mother), resides at Clauta, Okla.

Earl K. Hocum, Private of Company "F", 21st Engineers, L.R., was accidentally killed, being run over by a locomotive near Longuyon, France, Dec. 5, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 125, American Military Cemetery No. 777 in the Commune of Vertusey, District of Commercy, Dept. of Meuse, France, Dec. 7, 1918.

Private Hocum was born Oct. 16, 1887, and enlisted at Spokane, Wash., Sept. 28, 1917.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Hattie Hocum (mother) resides at 217 South Division St., Spokane, Wash.

John A. Fox, Private of Company "G", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of bronchial pneumonia in the hospital at Gondrecourt (Meuse), France, Oct. 8, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 37, American Military Cemetery at Gondrecourt (Meuse), France, Oct. 9, 1918.

His nearest relative Mrs. Rose A. Fox (mother) resides at 69 Thompson St., Buffalo, N. Y.

Nathan L. Bagley, Private of Company "H", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of bronchial pneumonia in Camp Hospital No. 1, at Gondrecourt (Meuse), France, Oct. 5, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 43, American Military Cemetery at Gondrecourt (Meuse), France, Oct. 16, 1918.



His nearest relative, Mr. Frank Bagley (father), resides at Blackwell, Texas.

Charles H. Duffy, Corporal of Company "H", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of Pneumonia in Evacuation Hospital No. 6 at Souilly (Meuse), France, Oct. 10, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 126, Sec. A, Plot 3, American Military Cemetery at Souilly (Meuse), France.

His nearest relative Mrs. Helen R. Duffy (sister), resides at 722 Spruce St., Philadelphia, Penna.

Harry A. Stroup, Private of Company "H", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., was killed in action by shell shock near Hatton-Chatel (Meuse) France, Oct. 6, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 33, American Military Cemetery at Gondrecourt (Meuse), France, Oct. 7, 1918.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Natalie Stroup (wife) resides at Bowdle, So. Dakota.

Robert McNamara, Private of Company "H", 21st Engineers, L.R., died in hospital Nov. 14, 1918, at Sinoucourt (Meuse), France from wounds caused by accidental explosion of a "dud" shell near Verdun (Meuse), and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 154, Sec. "D", Plot 4, American Military Cemetery at Sinoucourt (Meuse), France, Nov. 14, 1918.

His nearest relative, Miss Ella McNamara (sister), resides at 368 South Pearl St., Albany, New York.

Lorenzo Hardwidge, Private of Company "H", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of Lobar Pneumonia in Evacuation Hospital No. 6 at Souilly (Meuse), France, Oct. 15, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 151, Sec. A, Plot 3, Souilly (Meuse) France, Oct. 16, 1918.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Jane Hardwidge (mother), resides at Evanston, Wyoming.

Albert B. Wheaton, Sergeant of Company "H", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of bronchial pneumonia in Camp Hospital 52 at Le Mans (Sarthe), France, April 2, 1919, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 18, Section A, Plot 20, American Military Cemetery at Le Mans (Sarthe), France, April 3, 1919.

Sergeant Wheaton was born March 00, 1894, and enlisted in the Engineers at Rapid City, So. Dakota, May 15, 1918.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Albert Wheaton (wife), resides at 923 Quincy St., Rapid City, So. Dakota.

Thomas Roberts, Private of Company "H", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of bronchial pneumonia in Evacuation Hospital 18 at Briey (M. et M.), France, March 29, 1919, and was buried in Grave No. 94, Plot 3, American Military Cemetery at Briey (Merthe et Moselle), France, March 29, 1918.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Julia Roberts (mother), resides at 3506 Atlantic Ave., Richmond Hill, New York.

James Z. Hayward, Private First Class of Company "H", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of Spinal Meningitis in Camp Hospital 52 at Le Mans (Sarthe), France, April 10, 1919, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 1, Section A, Plot 20, American Military Cemetery at Le Mans (Sarthe), France, April 10, 1919.

His nearest relative, Mrs. G. A. Hayward (mother), resides at Grangers, Wyoming.

Charles F. Roe, Private of Company "I", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of bronchial pneumonia in Camp Hospital No. 1, at Gondrecourt, France, October 29, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 104, American Military Cemetery at Gondrecourt (Meuse), France, October 30, 1918.

Adolphus B. Curtis, Private First Class of Company "I", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., of "Cause Unknown" in Hospital at Toul (Meurthe et Moselle), France, Jan. 21, 1919, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 1186, American Military Cemetery No. 91, at Toul (Meurthe et Moselle), France, January 23, 1919.

His nearest relative, Mrs. Gladys Curtis (mother), resides at Parkersburg, Illinois.

Mark Hardin, Corporal of 4th Battalion Headquarters Detachment, 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of bronchial pneumonia in Hospital at Toul (Meurthe et Moselle), France, January 1, 1919, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 1140, American Military Cemetery 91 at Toul (Meurthe et Moselle), France, January 3, 1919.

His nearest relative, Dr. D. L. Hardin (brother), resides at 1311 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D. C.

Frank Donatelle, Corporal of Company "L", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of General Peritonitis in hospital at Toul (Meurthe et Moselle), France, November 24, 1918, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 905, American Military Cemetery No. 91, at Toul (Meurthe et Moselle), France, November 27, 1918.

Corporal Donatelle was born June 3, 1887, and enlisted in the Engineers at Duluth, Minn., June 28, 1918.

His nearest relative, Samuel Donatelle (father), resides at Cumberland, Wis.

Caimelo Chillemi, Private of Company "M", 21st Regiment Engineers, L.R., died of "cause unknown," February 2, 1919, and was buried with full military honors in Grave No. 897, American Military Cemetery No. 6, at Bazouilles, Sur Meuse (Vosges), France, February 13, 1919.



# Mother

MASTER ENGINEER EDWARD WILKINSON

*'Tis true I serve amid the strife  
And in a soldier's murky life,  
In ceaseless din 'mid battle rife  
Face pain and harm.*

*And I am yours, and only you  
Will bear the load 'till I pull through.  
Oh! I would bear the load you rue  
And bring you calm.*

*But no! What pain there is to bear,  
You too, my mother, want to share;  
And in the field you would be there  
To bring a balm.*

*Oh, mothers, all, on every side  
Who suffer 'mid a hopeless pride,  
God help you all, when hope has died,  
And death brings calm.*

*For as the race from which you spring  
Must battle as a living thing,  
Your boy in death, his race must bring  
Victorious calm.*

*That mothers in the future may  
Look back upon the bloody way  
Where sons of other died, that they  
Be safe from harm.*

# List of Wounded in Action

Name	Rank	Serial No.	Company	Date	Extent of Injury
Broderick, William F.	Pvt. 1st Cl.	175458	E	Mar. 18	Severely Wounded
Duval, Alfred W.	Pvt.	175687	E	.....	Slightly Gassed
Laro, Fred E.	Pvt.	176117	E	.....	Slightly Gassed
Austin, Luther V.	Pvt.	175335	E	.....	Slightly Gassed
Frazer, Daniel P.	Pvt.	175762	E	.....	Slightly Gassed
Sharp, Roy C.	Pvt.	176602	E	.....	Slightly Gassed
Waters, Simon L.	Pvt.	176837	E	.....	Slightly Gassed
Davidson, Emmett A.	Pvt.	175635	E	June 19	Severely Gassed
Heitzinger, John J.	Pvt. 1st Cl.	175918	E	"	Severely Gassed
Hertz, James H.	Pvt. 1st Cl.	175927	E	"	Severely Gassed
Wickwire, Albertis	Pvt.	175460	E	"	Severely Gassed
Boyle, Miles J.	Pvt.	175439	D	.....	Slightly Gassed
Smith, Benjamin	Pvt.	176622	F	Oct. 23	Severely Wounded
Gates, Russell S.	Corp.	175576	F	.....	Slightly Wounded
Alexander, John A.	Pvt. 1st Cl.	175312	A	.....	Slightly Gassed
Berneister, Eddie	Pvt.	175479	A	.....	Slightly Wounded
Szabo, John	Pvt.	2279655	A	.....	Slightly Wounded
Bulla, George H.	Pvt.	175468	D	Oct. 30	Severely Gassed
Walworth, Fred E.	Corp.	176817	B	Nov. 1	Slightly Wounded
Griffin, Louis C.	Pvt. 1st Cl.	175814	E	Nov. 1	Severely Wounded
Cooper, H. F.	Pvt.	.....	E	.....	Slightly Wounded
McQuarrie, A.	Cook	.....	E	.....	Slightly Wounded
Whitney, A. P.	Pvt.	.....	E	.....	Slightly Wounded
Oliphant, Henry D.	Pvt. 1st Cl.	.....	B	.....	Severely Wound
.....	.....	.....	.....	Oct. ....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Gilbert, Woolsey T.	Mr. Engr. Jr. Gr.	175810	Hq. Det.	Nov. 4	Captured
Oliphant, Henry D.	Pvt. 1st Cl.	176383	B	Oct. 3	Captured
Smith, Justin P.	Pvt. 1st Cl.	176644	B	Oct. 3	Captured

# Light Railways as Related to Field Operations

By C. S. Elliot

The entry of the United States into the European War introduced a new phase of warfare to America's fighting men: That of stationary or trench warfare. Not only was it necessary to adopt new military tactics but means of transportation had to be provided which were best suited to the conditions as then existed. The increase in number and size of artillery pieces, entailing vast expenditures of ammunition, had greatly increased transportation problems in the combat area. Supplies were hauled from supply depots, far in the rear, by standard gauge railways to railheads comparatively near the front, but situated usually beyond the range of field artillery fire. There were several reasons, which are doubtless obvious, why standard gauge railways were not operated in the combat area for the distribution of supplies. They registered strongly on aerial photographs and were more or less subject to direct observation, and any signs of activity often resulted in shelling of the lines; and too, unless numerous branches were provided, they could serve directly only a small portion of the sector. Where operations were being conducted in a sector some distance from existing railways, extensions were expensive to build with comparatively heavy construction involving considerable time and labor. Standard Gauge Railroads were employed at different times (mostly during drives) in the combat area by heavy marine artillery mounted on specially built cars or trucks.

The Standard Gauge Railheads being established outside the zone of field artillery fire, transportation was provided for supplies to battery positions and to advance ration and supply dumps by means of animal drawn vehicles, trucks, or light railways as circumstances required.

From the advance dumps, supplies were hauled into the front line by cars or light tramways. Trucks, however, and to a lesser degree wagons, were largely dependent upon good roads and if none existed within the theatre of operations and conditions warranted, they had to be built which in turn required an enormous expenditure of time, labor and material.

At least a partial solution for the then existing advance transportation requirements was found to be in the development of light or combat railways. Of light construction, 60 Centimeter Gauge ( $23\frac{5}{8}$  inches), to a great extent sectional track, assembled before taking to the front, with steel ties and rails 16 to 25 pounds per yard, the light railways, following the contours, permitted great rapidity of construction without heavy cuts and fills they were less susceptible of enemy observation; if necessity demanded, they could be laid along the sides of the public highways; they permitted of construction even into the front line trenches as tramways operated by animal traction or by hand (push cars).

"Light Railways came into general use during the Japanese-Russian War in Manchuria. The equipment was of French construction and animal traction was mostly employed. The maximum capacity of a railroad line, as then operated, was about 600 tons daily."\* The French long before the present war, had built light railways, or "voies de soixantes" as they called them, from the standard gauge railheads to their heavy battery positions in and around such fortified towns as Verdun and Toul, for the transportation of ammunition and supplies. These light railways formed a nucleus around which during the war a vast network of light railways systems, varying in size and development, were built, paralleling



*Neuf Etang (Rangeral) Siding*

in a general way practically the entire front. When the United States entered the war, the Director General of Transportation, realizing the importance of this means of transportation, organized a special department, "The Department of Light Railways," to provide for the construction, operation and maintenance of these lines of communication.

A special railroad unit, the 21st Engineers (L.R.) was organized at Rockford, Illinois, to carry out this work. The sector northwest of Toul was selected as the scene of operations, and gradually the French constructed and operated lines in that vicinity were taken over and new lines were constructed in accordance with general plans formulated for future field operations. The light railways of the 21st were more and more closely coordinated with the military highways under the 23rd Engineers by consolidation of the two departments into the "Department of Light Railways and Roads" under the direction of Colonel Peek.

Mr. Robert K. Tomlin, writing for the "Engineering News-Record" (March, 1918), described the situation at that time as follows: "Early in the war it was found that to undertake the supply of the front lines with

\* "Engineers Field Manual."



motor trucks required such a great number of them that the highways were continually congested. It was found too, that this excessive motor traffic soon wore the road down to such an extent that the greater part of the motor trucks were required to repair the damage caused by their own traffic. The light railways were developed



*Unloading Stone from Narrow Gauge Cars at Broussay*

to overcome these difficulties, and they have been so successful that it is possible now to keep the highways in repair and to devote them entirely to the use of fast moving automobiles, motor cycles and motor trucks. In short, heavy and bulky traffic is moved on the railways; light and fast traffic on the highways."

The roads in the Toul Sector were in very poor condition, being too narrow and poorly maintained and thousands of tons of crushed rock was required to place the roads in first class condition. Stone quarries were opened up in a number of suitable locations on the line by detachments from the 28th Engineers. Rock trains were placed in service hauling stone to spurs near the road sites, from whence it was distributed by motor trucks. A variety of service was performed for divisional troops in greater and greater volume as time went on.

When the American First Army was formed, the 21st was assigned to that organization with supervision over all light railways in the First Army Area, assisted by other railway regiments and a number of labor battalions. When the Lorraine front was taken over by the Second Army, the light railways in that area were placed under jurisdiction of the 12th Engineers, assisted by the 22nd Engineers and units of the Third and Fourth Battalions of the 21st, recently arrived from the United States. The original units of the 21st remained with the First Army, continuing light railway operations in the Argonne, constructing and rehabilitating light railways in the wake of the rapidly advancing troops.

The signing of the Armistice soon brought to a close practically all of the work of supplying the line troops by light railways, the reconstruction of standard gauge railways having been pushed as rapidly as possible throughout the occupied territory.

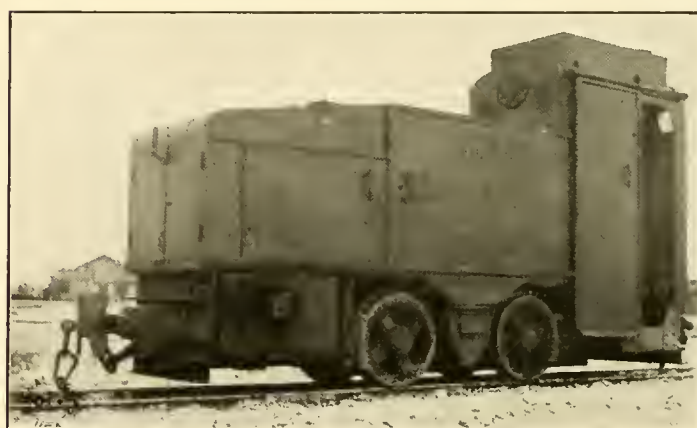
In making an estimate of the relative value of the light railways in supplying troops in the combat area it will be apparent that it will increase in direct ratio to the approximation of the conditions for which the light railways were intended; those of siege or stationary warfare. The more mobile warfare becomes, the less need there is of siege or heavy artillery, and its accessory to a degree, the light railways. Highways, too, under these

conditions would receive little attention as compared to those in stationary war with the corresponding increased requirements for road material. The ideal conditions expressed by Mr. Tomlin that "heavy and bulky traffic is moved on the railways; light and fast traffic on the highways" were realized, for the most part during a period of comparative inactivity. When the concentration of troops, ammunition and miscellaneous material was being made for the St. Mihiel Drive, the requirements were so great that the light railways, struggling under the burden of an enormous traffic, only handled a portion of the entire tonnage and the highways, under enemy observation during daylight and practically deserted, swarmed with motor transportation at night. Motor transportation was particularly difficult in the La Reine Forest. Without lights, the roads blotted out by the inky blackness of the dense forest, progress was very slow and frequent jams and accidents greatly hampered this means of transportation.

With the consummation of the offensive came other phases of problems in advance zone transportation, which were relieved somewhat, however, by the movement of many of the troops in reserve and some artillery units, as soon as the new front line was stabilized, to other scenes of activity. Lines of communication were now lengthened some fifteen or twenty kilometres. Such roads as existed in the devastated areas were in very poor condition. A large number of pioneer infantry and Engineer troops were assigned to the reconstruction of highways and the building of light railways through old "No Man's Land" and the numerous trench systems, to connections with German roads and railways. Within a few hours animal drawn vehicles were advancing ammunition and supplies slowly across the captured area in the wake of the now elusive "front line."

Almost invariably, heavy trucks attempting to negotiate the devastated stretches prematurely were mired, seriously blocking the roads. By the second day, however, roads had been placed in condition to permit passage of trucks to dumps behind the new front line, with badly needed supplies, subsistence, ammunition, etc.

In the meantime, the light railways were being con-



*Captured Armored Tractor*

nected with German steel, but were not ballasted and ready for comparatively heavy traffic until several days later, when the delivery of supplies was advanced well into the zone of artillery fire. Several new standard gauge lines were also slowly creeping forward towards proposed railheads, which in time would be available.

When, several weeks later, the number of troops had been reduced in that area, traffic resumed something of a normal appearance.

The campaign in the Argonne was somewhat of a repetition of the St. Mihiel operation in its later stages. Light railways here had been operated by the 14th Engineers at the beginning of the drive on September 26th, and assisted by other organizations, had pushed our rail ahead to connections with the German, when the 21st arrived from Lorraine and took over the railway rehabilitation and operation in the First Army area.

Operations here, in many ways, were under poorer conditions than had been before experienced. The high standards of highways and light railways maintained for so long in the Toul sector were lacking. The fighting had been more severe and lines of communication were badly damaged. Terminal facilities were inadequate; there were no coal or water supply systems, neither were there quarters for the men. In fact, it was a case of railroading with whatever equipment and material were available, and "salvage" was the watchword of the engineers throughout the campaign. It was only by American initiative, ingenuity and pluck that the subsistence and ammunition for the battling First Army was delivered to dumps close behind the firing line in spite of the almost insurmountable difficulties.

The resumption of the drive on November 1st developed so quickly into open warfare that it was impossible to advance the light railways fast enough to be of much further service to the troops in line. Upon completion of the railway into Montigny about the time the armistice became effective, the principal work of the light railways became that of transportation of ammunition and salvage from the late battlefields to the various standard gauge railheads in the area.

Throughout the ten months construction and operation of light railways by the 21st, the results attained in transportation of supplies for the units of the First Army were such as fully justified the creation of this branch of the service.

It seems certain that the experiences gained by the

Actually it appears that more was accomplished, man for man, during the St. Mihiel operations than at any other time. In the St. Mihiel operations, for example, the construction and maintenance departments had nine companies of attached troops, while in the Argonne they had sixteen companies (3 quarry), although the operat-



*Sidings and Crossing*

ing companies, at St. Mihiel, had three companies of attached troops, only a portion of them, were available for train service, and moreover, during the month of September, the mileage of operated lines had expanded from something more than two hundred kilometers to about three hundred and fifty kilometers. In the Argonne, the three operating companies, were operating 164 kilometers of main line on October 31st and 187 kilometers on November 30th. The operating figures available for the month of October do not differentiate between the St. Mihiel and Argonne operations, but they do show that in the month of September 81,044 net tons were handled as compared with 38,008 net tons in October and 45,234 net tons in November. In this connection, however, it must be considered that the light railways in the St. Mihiel sector were already "Going concerns"; there had been ample time for perfecting the organization and for the concentration of supplies, while in the Argonne, it was necessary to create a railway system, in a strange country, almost overnight, under the most trying circumstances.

According to the Chief Engineer, A. E. F., at the time of the armistice, 2,240 kilometers of light railways were being operated by American railway engineers, of which 1,740 kilometers were captured German lines, and up to February 1st, 1919, the total tonnage handled by these light railways was 860,652 tons. When it is considered that the 21st Engineers, during the period March 1st to November 30th, handled \*328,194 tons, it can be realized that the results attained were of great importance, particularly when it is considered that since the average motor truck has a capacity of three tons, that the tonnage handled by the 21st alone kept the equivalent of 27,000 trucks off the highways in September and 13,000 and 15,000 in October and November respectively, or the equivalent in round figures of 109,000 trucks for the entire period of operation.

\* This does not include tonnage handled in the Baccarat sector, or that handled by units of the 21st attached to the 14th and 12th at various times. Nor does it include the many trains which owing to lack of train wires did not appear on the dispatchers' train sheets.



*Carload of Heavy Shells and Powder*

21st in the St. Mihiel offensive were largely responsible for the success of the Argonne campaign in October and November. By the latter period it was realized more clearly the requirements of the construction and operating departments, particularly in personnel and something of the difficulties that might be encountered.

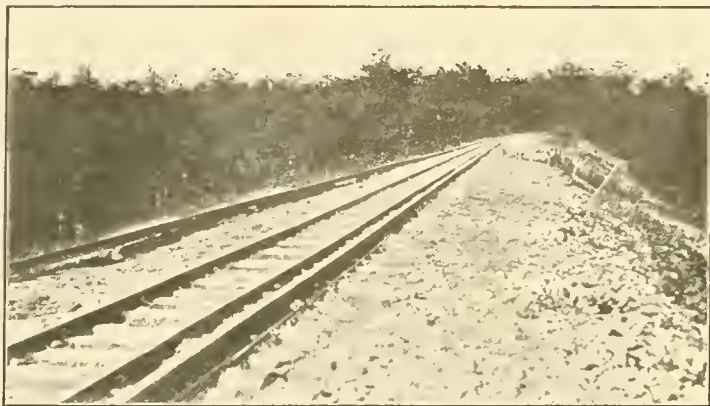


# Light Railway Construction

Capt. M. E. Pumphrey

In the early part of June, 1918, studies were begun of the possible places where the American Light Railway lines could be successfully connected up with the German lines in case of an advance.

Captain Pumphrey, the writer, and Lt. P. V. Brown were detailed by Colonel Peek to take up this work and prepare a report on the possibilities of extending the light railway lines across "no man's land" to a connection with the German lines, which were known to be of the same gauge as the American lines. After a careful study of the maps, showing the existing lines on both sides of "no man's land," it was decided to study on the ground the local conditions which would have an intimate bearing on



*First line from Flirey across "No Man's Land" to Bois Mort Mare*

the work. The first line decided upon was one extending north from Flirey across "no man's land" to a connection with a German line in the Bois Mort Mare.

This line was chosen because of the short distance between the ends of the tracks, as both lines ran up to the trenches; also the ground in this vicinity was not badly torn by shell fire or mines, all of which facilitated construction. A reconnaissance was made from the end of the American line to "no man's land," and an exact location was decided upon. This survey was made in daylight under considerable danger, but, fortunately, we were subjected to enemy fire only once, causing us to abandon the work for a few hours.

The second line studied was an extension of the American line from the Bois Chanot, west of Rambucourt, to a connection with the German lines near Richécourt. Practically all this line was under the enemy's direct observation from Mount Sec, one of the highest and strongest German positions in the St. Mihiel sector. The fact that it would be a direct forward line from the ammunition dump at Trondes, and that it promised to be of easy gradients and light construction work, caused it to be adopted as a necessary line. A location was decided upon from the end of our track to our front line trenches

by a thorough study of conditions on the ground. By using military observation posts and prominent points on clear days, observations were made of the terrain beyond our own front line positions over "No Man's Land" and back of the German front lines. In connection with this work, 1:5000 and 1:10,000 scale maps furnished by the French were used and found to be very reliable with the following exceptions: The military data concerning the German positions and railway lines were obtained by aerial photography. Photographs do not show the difference between animal traction and power traction lines. The Germans had many spurs laid with light section rail which would not carry our heavy equipment. It was also found the photographs did not show the curvature accurately enough to determine whether our equipment could be utilized. From the maps it was as a rule very easy to determine the grades on the German lines by close study of the contours.

About the end of June a complete report of the two projected lines was submitted with an estimate of the material, tools, labor and time necessary to complete the connection with the enemy's lines. Nothing further was done on this work until the latter part of August, when the offensive, later to be known as the St. Mihiel Offensive, was in preparation.

At the direction of Colonel Peek, a third line was studied. This line was planned to extend from the Pont de Metz in the St. Jean Canyon to a connection with the enemy's lines north of Remenauville. The reconnaissance work on this line was comparatively neither difficult nor dangerous as our observation posts were admirably suited for observation across "No Man's Land" and behind the German lines. After a thorough study of this line, an estimate was submitted with the recommendation that it be constructed in addition to the Flirey and Bois Chanot extension.

The estimates submitted on the three lines were approved and the officer in charge was directed to move the necessary material, tools and equipment to as near the end of our lines at the three places as possible. Movement of this material was started about September 5th, and through necessity was accomplished almost entirely at night. Enormous difficulties were encountered in moving the much needed material to the front, and it was only by the determined efforts of the non-commissioned officers and men working at the front that this material was properly placed on the night of the attack. All necessary material and equipment except ballast were placed within half of a kilometer of the ends of the lines which were to be extended, and carefully camouflaged to defeat enemy observation. Ballast, one of the most important elements in the construction of good track was almost totally disregarded and only thirty per cent of the estimated amount was furnished. The failure to furnish



sufficient quantities of ballast endangered the success of the light railway construction and retarded the work to a great extent.

The construction work during the St. Mihiel Drive was in charge of three construction engineers. Two platoons of "A" Company and two companies of negro service troops, 700 men, were assigned for the work on the Bois Chanot line under Captain R. A. Redford, as construction engineer, and moved into the Bois Chanot, September 11th. For the Flirey extension, Company "B" and one company of negro service troops, 500 men, were assigned, and moved up to Ansauville. The writer was in charge of this work as construction engineer. On the Pont de Metz Extension, Lieut. C. E. Signer was in charge of construction. The forces consisted of one platoon of Company "A" and one company of negro service troops, about 400 men. These men were held in St. Jean Canyon until the morning of the drive. These construction units acted individually and reported only to the chief engineer at headquarters. Each unit had a survey or reconnaissance party in charge of an officer and directly under the orders of the construction engineer.

Under cover of darkness the morning of the 12th, the three construction units were moved to the end of the line, there to await the zero hour. When the infantry went "over the top" the survey parties went forward marking out with white tape location of the lines and several men of each party followed the infantry to make a speedy examination and report the general condition of the German lines.

Trouble started at once because the service troops did not understand the work. It was therefore necessary to use the experienced men of the regiment as gang leaders. These men took orders from the officers of the 21st Engineers who acted as resident engineers and the construction engineer only. By nine o'clock of the morning of the 12th several hundred meters of roadbed had been completed and track laying commenced. All the construction work was done by pick and shovel and only a rough job was done as the necessity for a connection with the German lines was very urgent in order to put supplies over the line to the front for the combatant forces. As the construction work went forward many difficulties arose. For instance, the sectional track was found to have been thrown together and in many cases on one side of a section there would be a twenty-pound rail and the other side a twenty-five-pound rail. As fish plates were only available for one type of rail, it was necessary to cast these sections aside. Also the curve sections were composed of two rails of exactly the same length, thus necessitating the sawing off of one end of the inside rail. This small matter trebled the time necessary to lay the track. The gasoline tractors which were furnished for this work were in bad condition and it was with the greatest difficulty that one of every three was kept going and when at least three tractors were needed on each job, it can be readily seen that enormous delays were incurred on this account.

The survey parties following the infantry reported condition on the German lines in the Bois Mort Mare and near Richecourt as not what had been anticipated, thus requiring changing our projected lines in order to connect up with lines which could be utilized at once. The change in the line in the Bois de Mort Mare was slight, and in fact reduced the work from that which was originally contemplated. The connection at Richecourt was discovered to be poor so it was decided to connect with the

enemy's line which ran to the west of Mont Sec. As the time was limited, it was impossible to obtain approval of the changes and it was only afterward that the director of Light Railways was informed of the changes made. Lieut. Signor, in charge of the extension from the Pont de Metz found conditions very much as had been anticipated, therefore making no changes in the original plans.

During the time of construction, men frequently worked as long as thirty-six hours without rest, and it was by such efforts that traffic was inaugurated over the Flirey and Pont de Metz on September 16th and over the Bois Chanot line on the 18th. It was at this time that the lack of ballast caused delay in the utilization of the light railways to its full capacity. The new track absolutely failed to withstand the heavy traffic which the operating department endeavored to put over in order to be of the maximum assistance to the combatant troops. Derailments were of frequent occurrence, and the operating and maintenance men demonstrated admirable endurance in their efforts to meet the urgent demand for supplies by the combatant troops. The commendable accomplishments of these men were heralded by neither voice nor press, they were awarded no medals, and their tireless efforts were unnoticed by the majority, but those of us



*Siding at Neuf Etang*

who had the opportunity to observe the work accomplished will always remember and honor them for it.

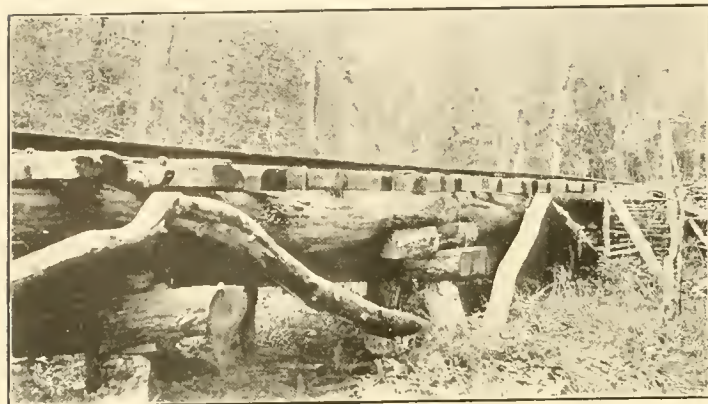
After September 20th, working parties were distributed over the various captured lines and they were rapidly repaired and put into condition for traffic. By October 5th, it was possible to deliver supplies to any part of the expansive area which was captured in the St. Mihiel Offensive.

In the construction of the foregoing extensions many bitter lessons were learned. It was found that on all three lines that the forces available were totally inadequate to make the required progress. Three times the forces that were available should have been furnished. None but experienced light railway construction troops should be used if any real progress is desired. The amount of ballast which had been stored for the work previous was only about 15% of what it should have been.

The foregoing work was under the personal supervision of Col. H. J. Slifer who spent as much time as possible on each line. His great experience and wonderful judgment was a constant source of encouragement but due to the fact that a considerable part of his time had to be spent at Sorey, with a poor line of communication to the front, much time was lost at critical moments. It was absolutely essential that the best telephone commun-

ication be maintained from the field headquarters to the most advanced points of construction.

A few days previous to the beginning of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, Captain P. V. Brown, was ordered to make reconnaissance for the extension of the light railways in that sector. After a careful study and examina-



*Bridge on Bois Chanot Line*

tion of the terrain he submitted a plan for extending the French Light Railway from near Esnes to a connection with the German lines in the Bois Mont Faucon, and an extension of the French lines from southeast of Vauquois to a connection with the German lines north of Vauquois. A few companies of the 14th Engineers and labor troops were available for this service. Due to the lack of time prior to this offensive it was impossible to store the necessary material and tools close to the places where the work was to commence. This afterwards was found to be a handicap to construction. After the infantry had gone forward on September 26, work was commenced on the above mentioned lines. This work was accomplished under most trying conditions with inexperienced personnel, both men and officers. The results gained were far beyond expectation considering the many disadvantages prevailing.

In the meantime the 21st Engineers, being relieved by the 12th Engineers, had moved to the Argonne-Meuse front, and by October 12th, had completely taken over the light railway work of this sector and were engaged on the construction and rehabilitation of the line from Esnes to Mont Faucon, from Aubreville to Cheppy and Varennes to Apremont. This work progressed rapidly and by November 1st, supplies were being delivered up to within two or three kilometers of our front. During the latter part of October plans were made for following up the offensive which was to commence on November 1st. On that date our officer in charge, with a large force of men and supplies was located near Grand Pre for the purpose of repairing the German line on to Buzancy, should the infantry go forward. The writer on this date was located at Romagne with ample force and material to follow up our attacking troops. During the time between November 1st and 11th, the 21st Engineers maintained their old lines which were being constantly shot out and also repaired the German lines, so that on the day when the armistice went into effect, supplies were being delivered in Buzancy and Montigny. During the time between October 12th and November 11th, it is believed that no organization ever produced the results which were accomplished by the 21st Engineers. The amount of construction and tonnage hauled seemed almost incredible of ac-

complishment six months prior. At the conclusion of hostilities the average haul for ammunition and rations exceeded fifty kilometers. When it is considered that the maximum economic haul for light railways, is about sixteen kilometers, it becomes plainly evident that this was a remarkable undertaking. It is an unquestionable fact that the results obtained would have been reduced immensely had the combatant troops been forced to rely solely upon motor transportation for their ammunition and rations. In planning for the amount of tonnage to be hauled and the disposition of supplies, the French liaison officers often expressed their doubt as to the possibility of moving the immense tonnage which our people had undertaken. Even until the end they were unable to believe that we could accomplish the tasks set before us every day.

All the success and wonderful results which the 21st Engineers accomplished was due primarily to the ripe experience and shrewd foresight of our fine old patriot, Colonel Slifer, who labored only for the success of the cause for which the regiment was formed.

Following are some of the conclusions drawn from actual experiences:

The activities of the light railways (60 c.m.) in the zone of advance are greatly dependent upon local conditions such as the degree of activity of the fighting, nature of the terrain and state of the highways. Primarily, light railways belong to a war of position and are comparatively of little use in a war of movement, as the normal gauge railways can generally be utilized if proper preparations are made. Upon taking position in a sector a general study should be made of all existing lines, of the terrain, of the necessity of the troops occupying the sector with a view of providing the facilities to reduce truck haul on the highways, always considering the possibilities held by the future. Liaison should be maintained with the combatant troops occupying the sector in order that their requirements may be taken care of. In practice it will be found that all the staff officers and officers of other units than light railways will entertain very decided opinions as to the lines which should be constructed. Very few of them will be found to have any conception of the amount of labor and material needed to construct a light railway and practically no knowledge of the capacity of a light railway in serving the combatant troops. Some have declared that light railways were absolutely useless and would seek to prevent the construction of lines where they were badly needed and they would request lines to be built without regard to the limitations of operation, and useless if it could be done. A number of officers have expressed their desire to do all their loading and unloading of supplies from the main line, absolutely disregarding the blocking of traffic and on frequent occasions failing to unload supplies from the cars after they had been placed in a siding for days at a time thus tying up equipment unnecessarily.

A general plan as to railheads, i.e. the establishing of transfer yards where material can be taken from the normal gauge and shipped out on the light railways. These railheads should be approximately ten miles from the front and if possible in sites protected by the natural lay of the terrain from enemy observation or artillery fire. From the railheads so-called back lines are established which run up within five miles of the front. These back lines should be built according to best standards, that is



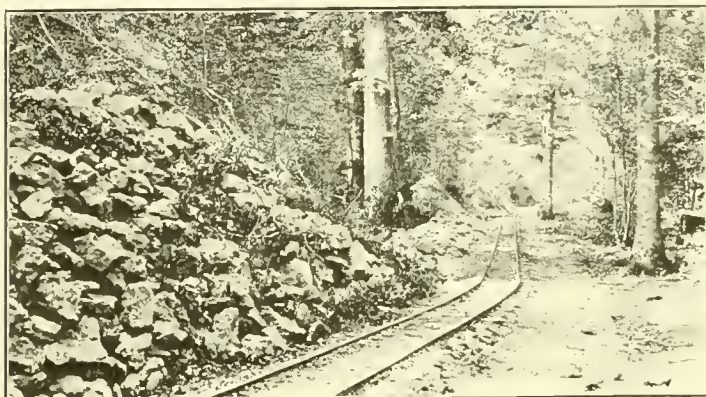
with easy curves and low grades. In practice with equipment such as used by the American army, it is found that minimum curve radius should be not less than 50 metres, and maximum grades should not exceed 1.5%. Cuts should be fourteen feet in width and fills nine feet in width at sub-grade. Drainage is of vital importance and must be well taken care of.

Lines which run from five miles back from the lines on to the front should be concealed from observation as much as possible and while it is not possible to maintain such a high standard of construction, no grades should exceed 3% and only in case of absolute necessity should curves of 30 metre radius be used. Experience has proven that there should be at least 8 inches of ballast on back lines and four inches on the advanced lines. It has been proven unadvisable to depend upon labor troops or service companies for construction or maintenance work as their men are generally inexperienced in railroad work and their officers indifferent. Each construction company should have two or three competent telephone linemen. Ample motor equipment should be provided in order to facilitate the handling of tools and men.

Maintenance under the heavy traffic which is apt to be encountered renders it very necessary that well-trained maintenance men be available in sufficient numbers for maintaining the lines. It has been found that the sixteen-pound rail is too light for the heavy American equipment while the twenty-five-pound rail is needlessly heavy. On the whole the twenty-pound English rail is the best for general use. It has sufficient strength, with a head wide

enough to enable the motive power to develop full traction.

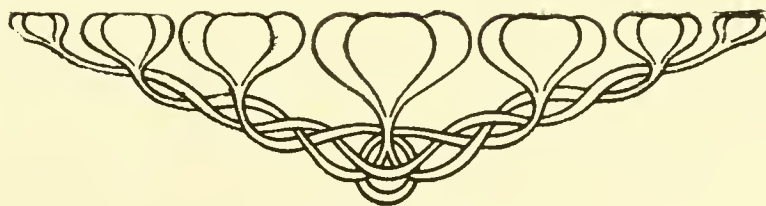
On the back lines the track should be laid with spikes and wooden ties, and on advanced lines, sections assembled with steel ties, should be used. On account of difficulties of maintenance it was found that the American Standard of eight steel ties to each five metre section was insuffi-



*Broken Stone and Rock Storage Between Raulecourt and Nauginsard*

cient, the tie should be increased somewhat in size and there should be ten to the five metre section.

There should be lines running to the rear from the railheads about every fifteen miles apart. These lines should run back at least twenty miles from the railhead where back shops should be located. These lines would also be available for the purpose of evacuating material in case of a retirement.







Officers of the 21st Regiment Engineers—December, 1917

# The Work of Colonel E. D. Peek

Major P. S. Lewis

Colonel E. D. Peek was assigned to the command of the 21st Engineers (Light Railway), on September 10th, 1917. At that time the regiment, created only a short time before by War Department General Order No. 108, 1917, existed only in name, without personnel or equipment.

The commanding officer was, therefore, confronted with the task of organizing and equipping the regiment for overseas service in the shortest time possible. Not only was the regiment to be formed and carefully trained as a military unit, but its identity as a railway organization was also to be provided for, and assignment of officers and men was made in conformance with these dual requirements.

The problems of organizing, equipping and training the regiment occupied Colonel Peek's entire attention from September until the departure for France late in December.

On boarding the transport, President Grant at Hoboken, the Colonel was assigned to the command of all army troops on board, some 5,000 men. This was the first successful trip of the President Grant as a troopship and required considerable work to arrange for a proper distribution of troops, to establish proper boat drills and messing arrangements and to develop an adequate system of interior guards.

After landing in France, Colonel Peek was placed in charge of the construction of a six-mile standard gauge cut off near Nevers, which, however, he did not remain to finish as the regiment was assigned to the American sector northwest of Toul late in February. Headquarters were established at Sorey and he became the representative of the director of Light Railways and Roads in the Toul Sector, with jurisdiction over road construction and maintenance and quarry operations throughout the sector. In May, 1918, his jurisdiction was extended to the Baccarat Sector and extensive plans were made for further development of the light railways and studies made of all French lines between Toul and Baccarat Sectors.

On August 17, 1918, Colonel Peek was called to First Army Headquarters as Engineer of Railways and Roads. As such he commanded the army engineer troops assigned to railway, road and bridge work, prepared all engineering plans of operation to be carried on in connection with the army's plan of action, procured all necessary supplies for carrying out these plans and issued detailed instructions covering employment of army engineer troops.

Almost at once preparations were started for the offensive of the First Army against the St. Mihiel salient. Plans were developed for the extension of standard gauge and light railways following the advance and for the operation of these lines during the offensive, as well as plans for the extension and maintenance of roads and repair of bridges. Additional troops were secured from the S.O.S. and assigned to stations in the army area.

Large quantities of track material, ballast, tools, road metal and bridge material were moved to the forward area for use following the advance. The colonel worked with untiring efforts in making the detailed preparations for the offensive and was constantly in touch with the advance, directing and advising as the operation developed and preparing for future engineer requirements and employment of engineer personnel.

Directly after the start of the St. Mihiel Offensive (September 12, 1918), preparations were started for an offensive by the First army between the Argonne Forest and the Meuse River. At this time, there were no American Army engineer personnel, material or equipment in the sector, which was an entirely strange area, both as to existing railway and road systems, and the possibilities of activities in the event of an advance.

Active steps were at once taken with a view of making a complete study of the railways and road situation and plans developed for the operation and extension of the standard gauge and light railways and the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges. Army engineer troops, rolling stock, material and equipment were transferred from the Rattentout and Toul Sectors and additional personnel, material and equipment secured from the S.O.S.

Colonel Peek was extremely active in preparing for the new offensive, in securing and placing the large number of engineer troops and supplies required for the offensive and arranging the numerous details of liaison with the French army relative to taking over the engineer activities in the new sector.

The offensive started September 26th and immediately following the advance, army engineer troops started extensions of the light and standard gauge railway lines and the repair of roads and bridges across former "no man's land." However, the activities of the engineers were met by almost unsurmountable difficulties on all sides. The terrain across former "no man's land" had been badly cut by shellfire during four years of hard fighting and heavy rains had turned the entire country into a sea of mud. Railroads, roads and bridges had been badly damaged by enemy demolition and American shellfire and roads were badly congested with advancing artillery and transports so that their repair and maintenance was extremely difficult.

From the start of this offensive until after the armistice on November 11th, Colonel Peek was constantly engaged in overcoming the difficulties in connection with the engineer work incident upon the advance and in organizing, directing and supervising the employment of the army engineer troops under his command, which at one time numbered over 40,000 men.

Some idea of the scope of this work during the Argonne-Meuse operation may be gained from the following figures:





*Colonel E. D. Peck and Staff*

#### *Standard Gauge Railway Lines*

New track constructed.....	30.8 km.
Track reconstructed .....	75.0 km.
Lines operated .....	95.0 km.

#### *Light Railway Lines*

Track reconstructed and constructed.....	191.0 km.
Lines operated .....	791.0 km.
Captured Boche Lines not rehabilitated...	427.0 km.

#### *Bridges*

Total built .....	55
Total length .....	3509 ft.

#### *Roads*

Maintained by army engineers, November 11th	514.0 km.
Stone used in roads, Sept. 25th to Nov. 11th	137,360 tons.

On November 26th, Colonel Peck was appointed Chief Engineer of the First Army which position he held till January 6, 1919. The signing of the armistice had by no means decreased the work of the army engineers as there remained a great mileage of roads in the army area requiring constant maintenance, as well as extensions of

standard gauge and light railway lines to be completed, maintained and operated. The army also continued the operations of the railroad lines supplying the troops in this area and engaged in extensive salvage and evacuation operations.

These activities gradually decreased and by the first of the year, practically all army engineer troops and the projects on which they were engaged had been turned over to the S.O.S.

During his last month as Chief Engineer of the First Army, Colonel Peck prepared extensive historical reports to the commanding general, First Army, and a more technical report to the chief engineer, A.E.F., covering operations of engineer troops of the First Army during the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne Offensives.

On January 6th, the colonel was called to General Headquarters, A.E.F., at Chaumont for duty in the Transportation Section, G-4. This section, in addition to handling transportation problems as a staff proposition throughout the A.E.F., is directly charged with the supervision of transportation in the Advance Section, S.O.S. On April 13th, he was appointed Deputy Director General of transportation, Zone of Advance, with Headquarters at Chaumont, which position he is now holding.



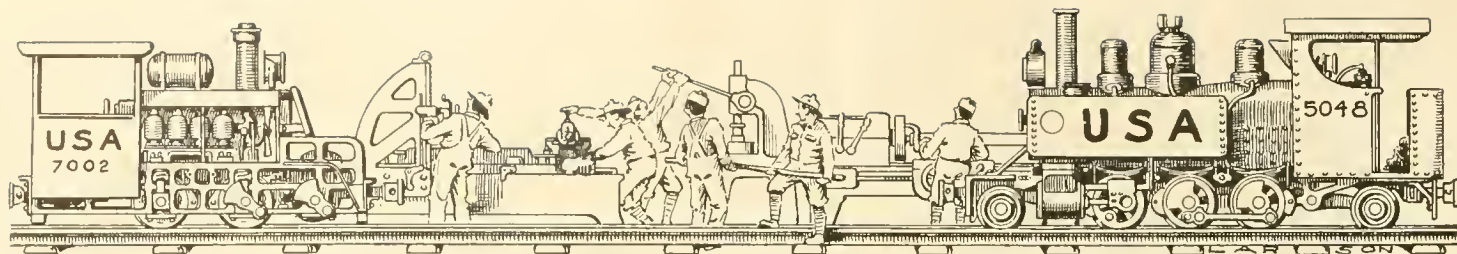
Gee!

That was a  
close shave.



LARSON

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## Regimental History

The 21st Engineers (light railway), a special engineer unit, was organized on September 10, 1917, at Camp Grant, Rockford, Illinois, under authority conferred by section 2 of the Act of Congress, "Authorizing the President to increase temporarily the military establishment of the United States."

The regiment was organized for the purpose of the construction, maintenance and operation of light railways in the theatre of war, and for such other duties as it might be called upon to perform by proper authority.

It was contemplated that the engineers would operate over a certain section of the front and that within these limits it would maintain all the existing track, build such new lines as might be necessary, and make all repairs to its engine and car equipment, using for this purpose its own shops, except for the very heavy repair work, which was to be done in a railroad shop in the rear.

The personnel of the organization consisted of forty-nine officers and 1,200 enlisted men. On October 13, 1917, pursuant to telegraphic instructions from the Adjutant General, eighty-six enlisted men were transferred to the 503rd Engineer Service Battalion, having been selected with a view of appointment as non-commissioned officers and to form the nucleus in the organization of the new unit. These men were transferred from the regiment and left on the same day for Camp Merritt, Tenafly, N. J.

On October 18, 1917, a total of 322 men were transferred to the 35th Engineers. The transfer of these men was based upon their special qualifications for shop work, as ascertained from their service records.

On or about November 20, 1917, authority was received from the Chief Engineer to increase the strength of the regiment to 1,586 men, necessitating the expansion of each company from 188 to 250 men.

An additional unit was organized at that time, comprising an integral part of the regiment, designated as the "detachment unassigned." This organization was created to handle men assigned and forwarded to the regiment from recruiting depots. The recruits, before being permanently placed, were examined and classified according to their experience and training. In this manner, men who were not qualified for light railway service and its kindred requirements were, to a great extent, eliminated from the regiment and their subsequent assignment to other organizations effected for the convenience and benefit of the service. When the regiment had been recruited to full strength, this detachment was transferred as a unit to the 161st Depot Brigade, Camp Grant.

Classification of the 1st and 2nd Battalion was as follows:

1st Battalion:	{	A Company	Construction.
		B Company	Maintenance, including Bridge Section.
		C Company	Shop.
2nd Battalion:	{	D Company	Operating.
		E Company	Operating.
		F Company	Operating.

The officers assigned to the regiment were men of extensive and diversified experience in construction, operation and maintenance of railroads and engineering projects in the United States, Canada, Mexico and South America. The enlisted men comprised a body of men of high intellect and practical experience along railroad and engineering lines and were specially selected and enlisted for this particular unit.

During the period September 10 to December 16, 1917, the troops were instructed in close and extended order drill beginning with the school of the soldier to and including the school of the company. Elementary instructions and drill were given in the school of the battalion. Interior guard duty, target practice and short practice marches with full packs were also included in this period of training, good progress being made by the men in spite of the unsuitable weather conditions.

On December 7th the motor detachment, comprising one officer and forty-two men (including one man from the medical detachment) proceeded from Camp Grant to Camp Hill, Newport News, Va., for service overseas. On December 16, 1917, the regiment left Camp Grant en route to Camp Merritt, prepared for field service. The command left on four trains, traveling via the Chicago, Milwaukee and Gary to Chicago; Michigan Central to Niagara Falls; New York Central to Utica; New York, Ontario and Western to Newburgh; West Shore to Dumont, N. J. The first and second sections arrived at Dumont on the afternoon and late evening of the 18th, the third and fourth sections on the morning of the 19th. The personal baggage and equipment were unloaded from the cars and the command marched to Camp Merritt for temporary station, approximately one mile. On December 26, 1917, at 5 A. M., the command left Camp Merritt, marching to Cresskill, N. J., approximately two miles, entrained in two sections at 7 A. M. and proceeded to Hoboken via the Erie Railroad. The command then marched to the pier and boarded the S. S. President Grant for overseas service. The vessel left the pier at 4 P. M. the same date and dropped down the lower harbor, past Rockaway Beach and Sandy Hook and out to sea. This was the first successful trip made by the President Grant as a troop ship, and at the request of the commander, Captain Morton, U. S. N., the officers of the 21st Engineers made a careful study of





*Officers of the 21st Regiment Engineers (L. R.)—March, 1919*





*Lieut. Col. Robert H. Murray*

guard posts, abandon ship stations, sanitation and policing of the troops for use on future trips of the vessel when transporting other military organizations. The usual submarine scares were experienced during the voyage, but, fortunately, no actual attacks were made and at 10.30 A. M., January 10, 1918, the President Grant dropped anchor in the harbor at Brest, France.

The motor detachment sailed from Newport News, Va., on board the S. S. Tiger, January 9, 1918, touched at New York, January 11th and arrived at St. Nazaire, France, January 27, 1918. After remaining in the harbor two days, orders were received to proceed to Bordeaux, where the detachment disembarked on February 1, 1918. The motor equipment was unloaded and assembled here and the detachment rejoined the regiment in small groups, conveying the motor trucks and side cars, between February 19 and March 16, 1918.

Headquarters detachment and Companies A, B, C and D, with medical and ordnance detachments, disembarked from the President Grant at Brest, January 13, 1918, and traveling via Le Mans and Tours, arrived at Camp Duquesne, Gievres, at 3 P. M., January 14, 1918. All remained here except Regimental Headquarters Detachment, which left at 8.00 P. M. the same day for Challuy, near Nevers, where they arrived January 15th.

Companies A, B, C and D, upon their arrival at Gievres, were attached to the 15th Engineers for duty: Companies A and B, engaging in railroad construction and handling of supplies; Company C operating blacksmith and repair shops, locomotive cranes and assembling rolling stock; Company D handling medical, quartermaster and engineer supplies, clearing timber, etc. Company E disembarked and left Brest January 14th, and, arriving at Challuy, began the construction of Swiss huts and barracks and construction of 600 lineal feet of grade for a permanent connection on the P. M. L. Railway at that point. Company F disembarked and left Brest January 14th and took station at Jonchery (Haute-Marne), where they were attached to Advance Ordnance Depot No. 4, and engaged in the construction and operation of standard gauge railways and the unloading of material.

In February several companies were released from duty in the S. O. S. and moved to the zone of advance. Company A moved from Camp Duquesne on February 15th and established camp at Gerard Sas (Meuse) on February 17th and immediately commenced construction of a 60 c. m. line through the Forest de la Reine and an ammunition dump at Leonval.

Company B left Camp Duquesne February 26th and, arriving in the zone of advance, was billeted in the town of Cornieville (Meuse). Work was commenced unloading rail, ties and other material.

Company E left Challuy on February 22nd and took station at Menil-la-Tour (Meurthe et Moselle) the following day. Here they were quartered in barracks and were assigned to duty on the light railway, repairing equipment and track and assisting the French in train operation. Being unfamiliar with the French language and the peculiar operating conditions existing in the zone of advance, their work was at first quite naturally handicapped. However, the men quickly adapted themselves to their new environment and late in March the light railways from Menil La Tour to Broussey and Neuf Etang to end of track in the La Reine Forest were transferred to this company for operation.

Regimental Headquarters left Challuy February 25th, entrained at Nevers after loading a considerable quantity of tools and supplies, and arrived at Sorey (Meuse) on February 27th, where a permanent camp was established on the high ground above the railroad station. The general location for the terminal facilities of the light railway at Sorey having been selected, a topographical survey of the site was made and tentative plans made for the arrangement of tracks and buildings. A contour map was prepared and used in adapting to the ground the tentative plans and various changes suggested with a view of keeping down the quantity of earth work. These terminal facilities and equipment, provided for storehouses for regimental property and equipment warehouses and platforms for transfer from standard to narrow gauge, necessary yard tracks, engine house, machine shop, oil house, coal wharf and water supply. A survey was made for a light railway line from Sorey yard to Cornieville to connect with an existing line built by the French. A preliminary line was run, topography taken and plotted and from this a paper location was made which stood in the field with little alteration. The grade established met the requirement of 1.50% maximum compensated 0.03% degree of curvature with the exception of one 20 degree curve through the rock cut near Sorey. A survey was made and plans prepared for an evacuation hospital in the field east of the town of Sorey between the two main highways. A

survey was made and grades established for a cut-off line to avoid the heavy grades and curves in the old French 60 c. m. track where it followed the highway through the town of Cornieville. Sufficient notes were taken of alignment, grade and topography to permit of decided improvement on the line through the Forest de la Reine from its junction with the Cornieville-Bouey line near Neuf Etang. Reconnaissance and some surveys were made on an east and west line between Hamonville and Raulecourt.

On March 12th Company D was released from duty with the 15th Engineers at Camp Duquesne and took station with the regiment at Sorey on March 14th. The following day construction of Sorey Terminal was commenced. The construction of the railway between Sorey and Cornieville was also started, Company D working north out of Sorey and Company B south from Cornieville.

On March 30th Company C left Camp Duquesne and went into camp at Sorey on April 1st, where they relieved Company D on construction of the Cornieville line.

The month of April, 1918, found work progressing satisfactory. Surveys were completed for 60 c. m. lines from Nauginsard to Hamonville and to Raulecourt. Reconnaissance was made with the view of constructing a line from Raulecourt to the Meuse River. A topographic survey between Bois Chanot and Rambucourt was completed. Surveys were made for a line from Vertusey Point down to the canal docks at the village of Vertusey. A survey of the old French line from Rangeval to Menil-La-Tour was completed.

Company A was engaged in maintenance, ballasting the new line through the Forest de la Reine and construction of the Hamonville-Raulecourt line. Companies B and C were still constructing the Sorey-Cornieville line, assisted by Company 11, 1st Regiment Motor Mechanics, Signal Corps, Aviation Section, which was attached on April 3rd to the 21st Engineers for duty. Company F was released from duty at Jonchery (Haute Marne) on April 12th and, boarding train at Chaumont, arrived at Baccarat (Meurthe-et-Moselle) April 14th. The construction of light railways in this sector was then commenced under direction of the Director of Light Railways and Roads.

During the month of May, surveys were made as follows: A survey of the old French line from Rangeval to Broussey; four alternative lines were run, topography taken for a proposed line to run from the Sorey-Cornieville line westward through Euville and Vignot to Boncourt. A survey for the branch from the main line to the Yale Unit Hospital was completed. A new survey of the Nauginsard-Raulecourt line, to avoid barbed wire entanglements near Raulecourt, was completed. A reconnaissance for a cut-off line between Leonval and La Fouine north of Menil-La-Tour was made. A survey for a line to the artillery positions northeast of Hamonville was completed.

During May construction of the Nauginsard-Hamonville line was completed by Company A and work resumed on the Raulecourt line. Other miscellaneous work consisted of track maintenance from Neuf-Etang to Bois Chanot, ballasting and placing camouflage along the Hamonville line, constructing a new "Y" at Neuf Etang Junction, building bomb proofs, etc. The Sorey-Cornieville line with a spur to the canal dock at Vertusey was completed and ballasted. Company B took over maintenance of the line between Broussey and Menil-la-Tour at this time.

Sorey Terminal was 80% complete by the end of May. The standard gauge tracks had been laid and ballasted from the Est Railway to the regimental warehouse and to



*Col. Earl L. Brown*

the coal dock. The light railway running tracks through the yard and the engine house tracks were laid and ballasted, the regimental storehouse was completed, oil house, coal docks, engine house and machine shop nearly completed and the installation of machinery under way. Construction of the yard and ammunition dumps at Leonval was now 85% complete. This work was being done by details from Company E, 21st, 2nd, 101st and 508th Engineers.

The month of June, 1918, witnessed the completion of the greater part of construction projects and a considerable increase in transportation. Surveys were made for a line from Raulecourt to Broussey and from Sorey to Pagny. A survey was made for a change of line to artillery positions in the Bois de la Hazelle. Reconnaissance was made of the line north of Noviant and Manonville for extension of light railway in case of an advance. An officer was assigned to artillery and infantry liaison to enable the light railways to render the most efficient service possible.

During June Company A completed the Nauginsard-Raulecourt line and miscellaneous spurs and sidings on the Neuf-Etang-Nauginsard-Hamonville line, as well as grading and track laying Sorey yard and maintenance Neuf-Etang to Bois Chanot. Company B started construction



of a branch to Mobile Hospital No. 39, completed reconstruction of Cornieville yard and a new passing siding at "Cut-off." Miscellaneous work consisted of track maintenance Menil La Tour to Sorey. Company C was still engaged in yard construction at Sorey and were installing machinery in shops, assembling cars, etc.



*Second Battalion Staff*

The operating department was reorganized about June 1st and the light railways were divided into two operating divisions. The Sorey division, operated by Company D, was comprised of lines west of Neuf-Etang and Hamonville, and the Maxie division, operated by E Company, comprised the lines Menil-la-Tour to Neuf Etang and Menil-la-Tour to Beaumont and Bernecourt.

During July, 1918, the Engineering Department made numerous surveys for relocation of certain sections of existing French constructed lines. Two survey parties went to Baccarat to work in conjunction with Company F in railway location. Company A was engaged in grading, track laying, ballasting and camouflaging on the Raulecourt-Broussey line, maintenance of "M," "K" and main lines, building bridges and culverts, putting in switches, strengthening main line between Rock Spur and Fond d'Esse and miscellaneous work at various points.

Company B graded and laid track on the Raulecourt-Broussey line, completed construction of the spur to Base Hospital No. 39, constructed a spur to Evacuation Hospital No. 1, ballasted and surfaced tracks in Leonval yard, constructed a rifle range and continued the maintenance of E. G. H. and main lines. Company C was engaged in operating blacksmith and repair shops, assembling cars, yard maintenance, unloading engineer and Quartermaster supplies, etc. Companies D and E were engaged in train operation, handling rations, ammunition, engineer material,

ballast and miscellaneous supplies in rapidly increasing quantities.

In August, 1918, surveys and plans were made for the Aulnois-Boncourt line; surveys were completed and plans under way for the Pagny-Sorey line; surveys and plans were made for the Domgermain-Ecrouves line; surveys were made for connection of Abainville line with main line at Sorey; survey parties at Baccarat continued on preliminaries for various lines in that vicinity, running from standard gauge railheads to the front with intermediate connecting lines. This was discontinued on August 7, 1918, when the 12th Engineers took over the work in that area.

Company A was engaged in clearing and grading on the Aulnois-Boncourt line, grading and track laying on the connection of the Abainville line with the main line at Sorey, maintenance and various work. On August 28th this company moved to Ecrouves and started work on the Ecrouves-Domgermain line.

Company B was engaged in clearing and grading on the Aulnois-Boncourt line, maintenance of existing lines and construction of a new spur in Cornieville yard.

Company C was engaged in operation of machine and repair shops, assembling and repairing cars, repairing locomotives and tractors, maintenance Sorey yard and the handling of engineer material, as well as construction of warehouse No. 2 and highway construction in Sorey yard under supervision of 23rd Engineers.

Company F, which had been engaged in light railway construction and operation at Baccarat since its arrival in April, was relieved and left for Sorey on August 7th. Here details were furnished for unloading ballast and highway material at Sorey and Vertusey, construction of Warehouse No. 2 and grading of Aulnois the Boncourt line.

On September 1, 1918, the 21st took over for operation and maintenance all the French lines extending north, east and south from Menil-La-Tour to beyond the Moselle River. The total mileage operated and maintained by the 21st Engineers now comprised more than two hundred kilometers of track exclusive of yards, spurs and sidings.

The territory operated was divided into three operating divisions: The Sorey division, operated by Company D, comprised those lines west of Menil-la-Tour and Hamonville; the Maxie division, operated by Company F, comprised the lines south, north and east of Menil-la-Tour to Tremblecourt; the Belleville division, operated by Company E, comprised the lines east of Tremblecourt and La Vacherie.

Owing to the expected drive on this salient by the American First Army, the activities of the regiment were materially increased. The supply and motor transportation facilities were augmented and overhauled and the rolling stock placed in the best possible condition. Additional dumps and tracks were built for emergencies and to facilitate the supply movement for the line troops. The Pagny-Sorey line, the Domgermain-Ecrouves line and the Jouy-detour were completed. Prison stockades were built at Ligny and Pagny and a warehouse and tracks built for a ration dump at Belleville. The construction companies were actively engaged in establishing dumps for the purpose of connecting across No Man's Land, with the German light railway system. Material was placed to build four connections, as follows: From Chanut through Rambucourt, Xivray to Woinville, 8.5 kilometers; from Bernecourt through Fliery, 4.5 kilometers; Auberge St. Pierre through Bois-a-Haye, 6.0 kilometers. For the successful operation of the extensions through Fliery, Pont-de-Metz, with steam



power, the following back lines were rehabilitated between the 1st and 12th of September:

Bernecourt to Flirey, 4.0 kilometers.  
Manonville to Pont de Metz, 7.5 kilometers.  
Joli-Bois to Auberge-St. Pierre, 9.0 kilometers.

At this time the following organizations were attached to the 21st Engineers for duty on construction, operation and maintenance:

12th Engineers (operating), three companies.  
15th Engineers (construction, maintenance), one company.  
522 Service Battalion (maintenance), one company.  
528th Engineers (maintenance), four companies.  
537th Engineers (maintenance), two companies.  
808th Pioneer Infantry (maintenance), one company.

Before the St. Mihiel offensive started, early the morning of September 12th, two platoons of Company A, 21st Engineers, were moved to Xivray; one platoon of Company A to Pont-de-Metz and Company B moved to Flirey to begin the construction of the previous mentioned connecting lines. These companies were assisted by Pioneer Infantry and service battalions. The construction companies building the lines to connect with German steel carried their equipment and slept where the night found them for several days until the connections were made, after which they established camps and began the improvement of the newly constructed lines.

As fast as the advance was pushed ahead, surveying parties followed, verifying German lines and listing necessary repairs and materials. Construction details were sent out ahead to repair broken lines and operating men to gain knowledge of those lines so that the regiment would be in a position to begin operation as soon as the connecting lines were finished.

This drive added approximately 150 kilometres of main line to our operating divisions, necessitating some rearrangements thereof. The General Superintendent's office was moved to Menile-la-Tour to ensure close co-ordination between the three divisions, which were now known as the Eastern, Central and Western. New train schedules were established over the newly acquired lines to ration and ammunition dumps established at convenient points near the front, as it then existed. Liaison was constantly maintained with army corps and divisions in order that a maximum of light railway service could be rendered. The tonnage consisted of rations, water, forage, ammunition, troops and road engineer material, batteries and salvage. A number of light tanks were also hauled in and out of forward positions before and after the drive.

The Germans were found to be operating on this front a complete system of light railways. Their standard rail for these lines was a five meter section of ties and rail of approximately 18 pounds per yard. They had also used standard and meter gauge rails varying from 40 to 90 pounds on the 60 c. m. lines in many places. In fact, all meter gauge railroads in the area had been transformed into 60 c. m. lines by moving over one rail to conform to the gauge. It appeared that the shortage of motor transportation of the German armies was such that as much compensation was made as possible by means of light railways. The general standard of road bed and ballasting were practically the same as those prescribed for the American Expeditionary Force.

By the first of October the abnormal traffic conditions caused by the St. Mihiel drive had largely disappeared. From October 8th to 14th, the regiment commenced its movement to the Argonne sector, relieving the 12th and 14th Engineers. Regimental Headquarters moved to Vraincourt October 10th.

Company A moved October 8th to Abocourt.  
Company B moved October 13th to Cheppy.  
Company C moved October 11th to Dombasle.  
Company D moved October 12th to Dombasle.  
Company E moved October 13th to Cheppy.  
Company F moved October 14th to Varennes.

The territory turned over for operation extended towards the front from Les Islette to the Meuse River. In the advance of September 26th in this area other organi-



*1st Battalion Staff*

zations had run forward connecting lines between the old French lines and the German railway lines as follows:

Clon through the Argonne Forest.  
Dombasle through Cheppy.  
Dombasle through Montfaucon.

These lines were not completed as to ballast and alignment, making train movement very difficult. Immediately work was commenced to place these connections in good shape and to rehabilitate the German lines. The following organizations were attached for duty during this time and were placed at work as shown below:

1st Platoon, Company C, 28th Engineers, Abocourt, quarry.  
Company D, 22nd Engineers, Cheppy, maintenance and construction.  
Company E, 22nd Engineers, Barricade, maintenance and construction.  
Company F, 22nd Engineers, Grant, maintenance and quarry.  
2nd Platoons, Company C, 27th Engineers, Esnes, maintenance and construction.  
Company C, 56th Pioneer Infantry, Montfaucon, maintenance and construction.  
Company L, 59th Pioneer Infantry, Washington, maintenance and construction.  
Company A, 802nd Pioneer Infantry, Crater, maintenance and quarry.  
Company M, 802nd Pioneer Infantry, Cheppy, construction.  
Company D, 54th Pioneer Infantry, Cheppy, construction and maintenance.  
Company M, 54th Pioneer Infantry, Aubreville, quarry.





*Colonel Earl I. Brown and Staff*

Company I, 802nd Pioneer Infantry, Aubreville, quarry.

Company L, 802nd Pioneer Infantry, Cheppy, maintenance and construction.

Company B, 16th Engineers, Cheppy, maintenance and construction.

Company C, 16th Engineers, Cheppy, maintenance and construction.

Company D, 16th Engineers, Baulny, maintenance and construction.

Company E, 16th Engineers, Bois de Chemin, maintenance and construction.

Company F, 16th Engineers, Dombasle, maintenance and construction.

Immediately on arrival in the sector survey parties were sent out over the territory and by October 20th all German lines of any value up to the front line positions had been verified and tied up with the French railways. The total length of German lines rehabilitated to November 1st was approximately 100 kilometers. These railways were completely ballasted and service established as follows:

Line	Completed
Le Triangle-Barricades-Cheppy .....	Oct. 10th
Cheppy-Montfaucon connection .....	Oct. 30th
Aubreville-Neuvilly-Cheppy .....	Oct. 31st
Claon-Apremont connection .....	Oct. 30th
Esnes-Montfaucon .....	Oct. 30th

In addition to this, Dombasle and Aubreville yards were put in shape and new tracks laid for sidings and spurs to various dumps and to facilitate operation. Tracks

were ballasted whenever possible, the ballast being obtained from our own quarries and by hand broken stone from the ruins of shell-swept villages.

In the meantime, the Operation Department had established headquarters at Dombasle and three divisions organized. Company E operating out of Cheppy and Aubreville, Company D from Dombasle and Company F on Les Islettes line. The operations were extended as German lines were rehabilitated and by November 1st operations conducted were as follows:

Dombasle-Bemon-Montfaucon-Cierges.  
Aubreville-Cheppy-Charpentry-Chatel Chehery.  
Les Islettes-Claon-Lancon.  
Apremont-Manhattan connections.

Company C, 21st Engineers, opened a shop at Dombasle on October 11th and repaired and maintained all rolling stock and motive power.

By the end of the month the same class of service was being rendered as had been done on the St. Mihiel front. handling of rations, water, forage, ammunition and salvage. Due to the abnormal traffic conditions, it was found expedient to have at certain points on our own lines, large details to unload cars, that empties would be available for movement with the least possible delay. By this time the rapidly expanded net work of French and American operated lines in the area were being brought under direct supervision and formed a complete system of light railways from the service of the divisions and army corps compris-



ing the First Army. Companies were advancing the lines as fast as troop movements permitted and material gathered and brought forward to follow the army on the next big drive. On November 1st the advance work was continued in two directions, north from Romagne toward Montigny and northwest from Fleville toward Grand Pre. For the



*Pvt. O. D. Foster                      Wag. F. L. Sterrett*  
*The Long and Short of It*

former line, three companies, A, 21st Engineers; F Company, 16th Engineers, Company C, 56th Pioneer Infantry, started early in the morning from Romagne in two parties, one west toward Landres-St. George and the other north toward Bantheville. The work consisted largely of filling shell holes and replacing sections of track blown out by shell and mines. Fair progress was made and as the work advanced camps were moved forward. Other companies used on this line were Company E, 16th Engineers; Company F, 22nd Engineers; detachments of Company C, 27th and Company C, 28th Engineers, and Company L, 59th Pioneer Infantry.

On the line from Fleville Company B, 21st Engineers, carried the repairs ahead and on the second day had the line ready for operation as far as Grand Pre dump. This track was of 45-pound rail with wooden ties. One company of the 27th Engineers was then engaged for several days rebuilding four bridges demolished by the Germans, one being over the standard gauge railroad and two over the river at Grand Pre and the fourth about one kilometer north. On November 8th, the bridges were completed

and the track opened up to Briquenay, Company D, 16th Engineers, having moved one platoon there during construction of bridges for the track work, aided by one company of the 317th Engineers.

On November 7th Company B, 21st Engineers, took over the maintenance of the line from Mareq dump to Grand Pre bridges. Three companies 802nd Pioneer Infantry, three companies 16th Engineers, one company 317th Engineers were placed on the line between Briquenay and Buzancy rebuilding the grade blown out by mines. The track from Grand Pre bridges to Briquenay was sectional with steel ties, consequently was easily replaced. From Briquenay to Harricourt the track was of 30-pound rail with wooden ties and badly damaged by shell fire and the progress was very slow. Practically all the work was accomplished by the track forces with German tools and material salvaged on the ground. The most serious handicap was the poor means of communication. The growth of the light railway system in this sector is shown by the figures below:

	Kilometers of Track Operated During October	Operated Nov. 24th
Main line .....	164.9	187
Sidings, yards .....		10
Total track .....	164.9	227

On November 24th the regiment, having been assigned to the Transportation Corps, turned over light railway operations in the Argonne-Meuse sector to the 14th Engineers, Company D alone excepted, which remained at Romagne. Company A moved from Romagne to Cheppy via light railway on November 25th, remained there until the 27th, when they proceeded to Audun-le-Roman (Meurthe et Moselle) via motor trucks. Company B left Mareq November 25th and went to Cheppy, thence by trucks on the 27th to Longuyon (Meurthe et Moselle). Company C moved by truck from Dombasle to Longuyon on the 25th of November. Company F moved by truck from Baulny (Meuse) to Conflans November 24, 1918. On November 30th the 3rd Battalion joined the regiment and took station at Conflans. Company I was sent to Longuyon, Company H remained at Conflans and Company G continued on detached service at Abainville (Meuse).

The new assignment of the regiment brought to a close the particular work for which it was organized: "The construction and operation of combat railways in the 'theatre of operations.'" In the period of ten months on the light railway work there were many interesting as well as trying experiences. A variety of work was met that called for men of every kind of technical knowledge and the operating conditions tested the ability of the most experienced railroad men. At the beginning there was little evidence of activity along the front and the work proceeded with little excitement. Gradually the situation changed and the men came to know what war really meant with their varied experiences under shell and machine gun fire, bombs and gas. For most of the time adequate and comfortable quarters were provided for the men. This was not always possible, however, and as the work became more strenuous the physical stamina of the men was severely tried more and more, often under the worst weather conditions.

After arrival of the regiment in the vicinity of Conflans, the rehabilitation and operation of standard gauge railways north and east of Conflans was begun. Companies A and B were engaged in cleaning railroad right of ways

and general repairs to tracks. Interlocking plants and signals were overhauled and placed in operation as soon as possible with available material. Company C remained at Longuyon until December 14th, then moving to Audun le Roman, where they were engaged in rehabilitation of railroad, shops and repairs to motive power. On December 6th and 7th the Fourth Battalion, 21st Engineers, moved from Sorey (Meuse) and took station with the regiment at Conflans. On December 9th, the 4th Battalion headquarters was moved to Metz (Lorraine). Company D, having been relieved on December 23rd, moved by truck to Conflans, where they were assigned to operation. The operating companies now consisted of D, E, F, H, I and a portion of K, and the maintenance work was conducted by Companies A, B, K, L and M.

On January 28, 1919, the railroads operated by the 21st Engineers was organized into the 24th Grand Division, Transportation Corps, embracing the following lines:

Conflans to Longuyon via Baroncourt.

Conflans to Longuyon via Audun le Roman.

Baroncourt to Audun le Roman and the branch line from Audun-le-Roman to Villerupt.

The maintenance companies remained in railway service until the middle of February, 1919, when they were relieved by the French maintenance of way forces. The operating companies were engaged in the handling of American ration trains between Conflans and Audun-le-Roman, and the French freight and passenger trains between Conflans and Longuyon during this time. Late in February the Chemin de Fer de l'Est took over the operation of the lines comprising the 24th Grand Division. The crews handling the American ration trains between Conflans and Audun-le-Roman were gradually relieved by the American Transportation Corps forces and by the end

of the month all operating and shop forces were relieved except I Company, which was stationed at Audun-le-Roman and engaged in the operation of the yard. As soon as the companies (Company B excepted) were released from railroad duties, they were concentrated in and near Labry Barracks (Meurthe et Moselle). Company B remained at Spincourt owing to the lack of quarters at Labry. Company G remained on detached service at Abainville in the light railway central shops. Here were also Companies N and O, separate units of the 21st, which had never been placed under the jurisdiction of the Regimental Headquarters. Except for the units mentioned, the regiment remained at Labry Barracks until the latter part of March, engaged in intensive military training. The barracks at Labry Caserne provided excellent quarters for six companies and headquarters detachment, the remaining companies being quartered in the near vicinity. The parade ground of the post afforded excellent facilities for close order disciplinary drills, inspections, guard duties, battalion and regimental parades.

On March 22nd Company I was released from railroad service and rejoined the regiment. On the same date, the regiment, less Companies G, N and O, entrained in three sections at Conflans and departed for Le Mans (Sarthe) for duty under the district engineer, Le Mans area.

The regiment arrived at Le Mans on March 24th and moved into temporary quarters in the Forwarding Camp, American Embarkation Center. On March 25th the units of the regiment moved to various towns throughout the Le Mans area, Regimental Headquarters and Band alone remaining in the Forwarding Camp. The First Battalion was assigned to construction of hospital barracks, the second to road work and barracks, the third to construction of barracks and the fourth to road work.

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## Chronological History, Third Battalion

Authority for the organization of the 3rd Battalion, 21st Engineers, is contained in a letter from the Chief of Engineers, Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, dated June 12, 1918, which directs the forming of new organizations during the month of July, 1918, the battalion to consist of one shop and two operating companies for light railways.

The files of the battalion are incomplete, so it is not possible to give an accurate history in the early days of its organization. However, by reference to all available records and information obtained from non-commissioned officers, who were among the first to arrive, it can be stated that the organization was actually started June 21, 1918. The enlisted men began to arrive from the various National Army cantonments during the latter part of June, and this troop movement continued until July 30th, when their combined strength made a total of 1,750 men.

The organization of the 3rd and 4th Battalions was started at the same time and at first they did not exist as separate units. Then the real work of examining and classifying men and transferring them to the companies where they were needed was started. Owing to the variety and number of different qualifications required for the shop and operation companies, this was a task of some magnitude.

The 3rd Battalion was the first to have separate companies, G, H and I; the 4th Battalion existed as a detachment and was so designated, being used as a casual unit from which to draw men for the 3rd Battalion.

Major T. D. Sterling reported August 9th and assumed command. Prior to this time the functions of the Headquarters Detachment of the 3rd and 4th Battalion were performed by a temporary organization of varying numbers, which was known as Headquarters Company. August 16th the administration of the two battalions was separated and after that date they were individual organizations. However, the administrative duties were performed by the same officers for both units, as for the consolidated organization until departure of the 3rd Battalion for port of embarkation.

August 20th the 3rd Battalion, with full complement of 789 men and fourteen officers, left Fort Benjamin Harrison by train. The first section with Headquarters and Company G and Medical Detachment. The second section with Companies H and I. The following day, at Buffalo, the men of the first section enjoyed the privilege of a shower bath provided for transient troops by the Lackawanna Railroad Company. After twenty-four hours' ride in day coaches the bath was very refreshing to the men, and due compliment is given the railroad company. Although



troop movements were theoretically not matters of public knowledge, the train sections were greeted at every station and stop along the line, at all hours of the night as well as in the day time by crowds of people who must have known of the expected arrival of troop trains. The battalion arrived at Camp Merritt, N. J., at 12 noon, August 22, 1918. Here final steps prior to embarkation were taken.



*3rd Battalion Staff*

The paper work required to be accomplished in the short time at Camp Merritt necessitated the working of the men of Headquarters Detachment and the office forces of the companies day and night for a week. The principal work consisted of getting the personnel records of all the men and the passenger lists in absolutely accurate and uniform condition and in issuing full overseas equipment to every man. Near the end of the week the battalion was fully equipped, its records were in proper shape, the passenger list was ready and the assignment list had been turned in.

Final equipment and medical inspection of the entire command were conducted by the port inspector and camp medical surgeon, and it is worthy of note that both inspections were passed without any exceptions being taken, the inspecting officers complimenting the organization.

The commanding officer, adjutant and senior medical officer were ordered to precede the battalion to port by twenty-four hours. Accordingly, these officers proceeded to the port August 30th, where Major Sterling was designated as commanding officer of all troops aboard Transport No. 405 (White Star Line S. S. Belgic). The battalion followed August 31st, leaving Camp Merritt at 9.15 A. M., making a march of four and a half miles to Alpine Landing. This march was probably the most grueling the men of the battalion ever experienced, although it was not comparatively long. At that time troops departing overseas were not allowed barrack bags, and their entire equipment was carried on their person or in their packs. Clothed in wool uniforms with an August sun beating down upon them, enervated by the overwork and loss of sleep at Camp Merritt, carrying a seventy-pound pack up the steep road to the summit of the Palisades and then descending an even more steep and winding road to the banks of the Hudson, they were completely exhausted.

Only one man fell out of the column during the march,

and he arrived at the landing in time to go on board the ferry with his company. About noon the battalion was herded on board a ferryboat which was crowded to several times the normal capacity. Landing was made at Pier No. 58, North River, where the Red Cross provided hot coffee, sandwiches, buns, ice cream and cigarettes for all men. Here also were distributed the "report of safe arrival overseas" postal cards, which were filled out by the men and collected and handled by the Red Cross. Then the battalion's turn to be checked aboard the transport came. This was accomplished in the record time of forty minutes for the entire organization. The next morning the ship drew out into the river and dropped anchor in the lower bay and that afternoon, September 1, 1918, the convoy of which it was part set sail.

Eleven organizations travelled on the S. S. Belgic, a total of 118 officers and 5,013 enlisted men, of these, six organizations totaling 3,000 men, more than half the troops on board were replacement. During the voyage all troops, officers and men, were required to wear at all times (except when asleep) the life belts provided for every person aboard; life boat drills were also held frequently.

The weather throughout the voyage was fair, no accidents occurred, and no attack was made on the convoy. The health of the troops was consistently good; of course there were the average number of cases of seasickness.

Although the organization did not rate a regular band, before it left Camp Merritt instruments had been purchased and a volunteer band organized. It was the only band on board ship, and its contribution to the entertainment and recreation of the troops was invaluable thereafter. Although the battalion had little opportunity to take part in parades or other ceremonies, the band has always headed the column on the march; and here is set down what is already an established fact, that the value of music to the morale of marching troops cannot be overestimated.

The convoy anchored off the mouth of the Mersey River, September 12th, and waited for full tide in order to proceed up to Liverpool at which point the S. S. Belgic was docked the next morning. The 21st was one of the last organizations to leave the ship and was formed on the dock at a little after noon. Then headed by their very good, though small band, marched through the streets of Liverpool to the Knotty Ash Rest Camp, remaining there until the following afternoon.

Orders were received Saturday noon for the Third Battalion to entrain at 3:30 P. M., at Stanly Station and proceed to Southampton; arrangements being completed for this movement the organization moved out promptly and in good order and departed at the time ordered. A short stop was made at Birmingham where, through the kindness of the English Red Cross, coffee was served to all men on board. Arriving at Southampton about midnight the men quickly detrained and marched through the pitch dark streets of the city for a distance of about two miles to a rest camp. Here the organization remained until next day, Sunday, September 15th.

Pursuant to special order the battalion marched from the camp to the pier at Southampton and boarded the S. S. Yale which sailed for France late that evening. Landing was made at Le Havre, France, September 16th, about 8:00 A. M. The 3rd Battalion marched about seven kilometers to an American rest camp. Here the organization remained until September 17th, when special orders directing the battalion to proceed from Le Havre to Le Mans, there to receive issue of steel helmets and gas masks, and

instructions in the use of the latter, and to proceed from Le Mans to Abainville (Meuse) reporting to the commanding officer upon arrival for duty.

The train arrived at Le Mans the following day, the men were promptly unloaded at the station and marched to a camp ground on the Ainage Road. At this camp the men had their first experience in pitching "pup" tents. There was considerable discomfort the first few days, and a little sickness, on account of the low temperature. There were only two hospital cases, however, due to the excellent location, sandy soil and good physical condition of the men.

Steel helmets and gas masks were issued and intensive gas training commenced, continuing for three days.

On the morning of September 26th the battalion cleared this camp and proceeded to the station at Le Mans where the troops entrained and departed for Gondrecourt (Meuse); arriving the next evening. On account of the lateness of the hour and having no guide the men remained on the train that night. Early the next morning the organization detrained and marched to Abainville (Meuse), the men were assigned to barracks and the commanding officer reported to the commanding officer of the camp.

Abainville, headquarters of the Light Railway Central Shops, was an important junction of the narrow and standard gauge railroads and had extensive narrow gauge yards and shops belonging to the Department of Light Railways and Roads. Other units of engineer troops were already stationed there, and the Third Battalion for two or three weeks was used to furnish details for road and light railway construction and other ordinary manual labor. Later, details for shop and operating work were gradually drawn from the organization, but the battalion, as a unit, never took over any specified work.

The light railway staff officers already on duty at Abainville when this battalion arrived, continued to have general charge, but finally the Lieutenants of Company G were given subordinate assignments in the shops. At the same time the enlisted men of Company G were being assigned to work in the shops by a sort of filtering process, until on the first of November practically the whole company was engaged in shop work.

The officers and men of the operating companies, however, were never used strictly on their special line of work. Some of the officers were assigned to the subordinate supervision of such work as road and railway construction and repair, loading and unloading details, etc., while details of operating men were furnished to work under the superintendence of light railway officers from other organizations.

November 9th, pursuant to instructions from the D. L. R. & R., the Headquarters, Third Battalion, 21st Engineers, Companies H and I, and the Medical Detachment, left their stations at Abainville and Mauvages and proceeded by narrow gauge railway to Dombasle. (Company G was left on duty in the shops at Abainville.) Company H travelled in two sections, Company I in two sections; Headquarters and Medical Detachments in one section. The trains were made up of about six or seven gondolas and two or three box cars to the section, all of which were started well before noon. As usual travel via narrow gauge was very slow, and although the distance to be travelled was a little less than one hundred kilometers all the train sections were still in transit on November 12th, when at Rattentout, they were diverted to the vicinity of Fort de Tavannes, east of Verdun. Headquarters was established at the West Portal of the Tunnel de Tavannes. This diversion was due to a change in the plans of the

Chief Engineer of the First Army, necessitated by the cessation of hostilities.

Work was immediately begun on the reconstruction of the broad gauge line from Verdun to Conflans, Company H eventually being stationed at Abaucourt. Again the battalion was assigned to no work of its own to do, but was used to furnish details under the direction of a First Army Engineer Staff Officer for miscellaneous labor, with a comparatively few men in train operation.

The large number of troops employed on the work shortened the time necessary for its completion, numerous negro labor battalions arriving from day to day. Consequently on November 28th the Headquarters, Medical Detachment and Company H, proceeded by broad gauge railroad to Conflans, Company I to Longuyon, where they joined the first and second battalions of their regiment, which had charge of the operation, maintenance and shops of the broad gauge lines radiating from Conflans.

On May 5th the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions were relieved from duty and were concentrated on the "Forwarding Camps" near Le Mans during the following week. The organization having again been listed for early sailing, personnel, baggage and clothing records were made ready and "lay down" equipment inspections rehearsed preparatory to final inspections to be made by inspectors from General Headquarters.

On May 17th the troops in the Camp were reviewed by General Pershing, the Commander-in-Chief, who, in a short address at the close of the review, expressed his appreciation to the men for their achievements during the great war.

On May 20th the regiment (less the 4th Battalion), headed by the band, marched with colors flying to the entraining yards. Boarding the American box cars of which the two special trains consisted, the 21st was soon steaming out of Lemans for Brest. The latter point was reached early the next morning and after breakfast at the Camp near the docks, the long hike to Camp Pontanezen was made.

Remained at this Camp for almost a week, meanwhile receiving more final inspections and kerosene baths.

On the morning of May 27th the hike was made to the docks and loading onto a lighter, the men soon were walking up the gangplank of an old acquaintance, the U. S. S. President Grant. The following morning the 504th Engineers and numerous casual and hospital units came aboard, and 4 o'clock that afternoon found the President Grant getting under way towards the setting sun. After an uneventful voyage undisturbed by abandon ship drills or submarine scares, the huge liner dropped anchor in the harbor at Boston late in the afternoon of June 8th. The President Grant docked the next morning and at 10 o'clock the 21st disembarked and forming by companies inside the immense new building of the terminal, immediately boarded special trains for Camp Devens. Although no formal welcome was extended to the troops at Boston, the reception accorded them by the people along the route, the waving of handkerchiefs, the tooting of railroad engine and factory whistles, made manifest their heartiest appreciation and welcome.

The days of the old 21st were now numbered. On the 13th men assigned to demobilization at Camp Devens were transferred to the Casual Camp. On the 14th the men for the East, South and Middle West left on special trains and June 16th and 17th found the men for the far Southwest, West and Northwest hurrying away and the 21st then became only a memory.



# History of the Fourth Battalion

The 21st Engineers was a regiment of light railway shop and operating troops and the first and second battalions were already operating in France when the material for the fourth battalion was yet in the depot brigades.

During June, July and August this personnel began arriving at Fort Benjamin Harrison and while the third battalion was being formed the material for the fourth existed as a detachment. From this detachment the three companies, K, L and M were formed. When the third battalion departed on August 20th, all efforts were turned to formulating the fourth, although the companies had previously existed unofficially.

Prior to August 15th, the functions of headquarters detachment of the third and fourth battalions were performed by a temporary organization of varying numbers, usually about forty men, which was known as headquarters company. After August 16th, the battalions were separate organizations. However, the administrative duties were performed by the same officers for both battalions as for the consolidated organization, until departure of the third battalion for port of embarkation on August 20th.

In the next ten days the battalion was brought up to war strength, all preparations were made and on August 30th, with five officers, entrained in three sections of Pullmans on the Big 4 Route for Camp Merritt.

Arriving at Dumont station near Camp Merritt early Sunday morning, September 1st, a march was effected to barracks in the camp. In the next six days that followed, the battalion was fitted out in overseas clothes, the passenger lists completed, and sailing orders received. About 2 A. M. on the morning of September 6th, the battalion marched to Alpine Landing on the Hudson, boarded a ferryboat which delivered them to U. S. Army Pier No. 5 at Hoboken. Noon time found all men checked aboard the U. S. S. Manchuria. Sunday morning, September 8th, she left the pier travelling with three other transports, a battle cruiser and a destroyer in a southerly direction for two days. In the afternoon of the second day, a convoy of five transports and one destroyer from Newport News swelled the fleet and a zig-zag easterly course was assumed.

Abandon ship drill was practiced daily and at four different times the alarm was given, announcing the appearance of a submarine. No attempts were made, however, at destroying any of the transports. Three days before arriving at Brest, ten additional destroyers joined the convoy and ushered the fleet into the harbor at Brest on September 21st.

About noon, with the exception of a few men from headquarters and Company K the battalion went ashore, and marched about six kilometers to a camping ground beyond Pontenazen barracks. Here they erected pup tents as the only means of shelter from the almost continuous rain. During the week's stay here, the companies were detailed on barracks construction at Camp Pontenazen.

The battalion moved on September 28th to squad tents outside the walls of Camp Pontenazen. Late in the day orders were received to entrain the following day, so work on the camp ceased. The men on the docks joined the battalion that evening and preparations were made for

moving. Each man was issued a gas mask and after dark marched to the gas house, but to no avail as it was out of commission.

About two o'clock in the morning the battalion was formed and proceeded to the station at Brest, arriving there about sunrise. Soon the train departed and after seventy-two hours of travel, arriving at Gondrecourt October 2nd. From here they marched to Abainville, continuing on the narrow gauge to Mauvages where billets were found in barns and cellars and the companies were detailed on rock breaking and ballasting of the narrow gauge.

On October 13th Company M returned to Abainville where they were assigned to excavating and grading in the railroad yards. Leaving there October 19th, they proceeded to Sorey Gare, picking up part of the medical detachment at Mauvages. They were assigned to work in the shops and on the road at Sorey and at various other points and continued operation until moving to Conflans on December 7th.

Company L left Mauvages October 18th, proceeding to Menil-la-Tour, where they were attached to the 12th Engineers, then operating on the narrow gauge. K Company, Headquarters and the remainder of the Medical Detachment left Abainville October 28th on the narrow gauge, arriving at Sorey the same day. Half of K Company and Headquarters were quartered in barracks, while the remainder of K Company and those of the medical detachment continued the journey to Woinville and Washington, arriving that night, where they were assigned to duty on the road and in the shops. Later they moved to a new railroad constructed by themselves near Montsec. On November 1st, a few of the Company K men at Sorey were put to work on standard gauge operation and in the shops. The remainder were sent to Grosrouvres where they were attached to Company D, 12th Engineers.

On December 7th the entire battalion entrained via narrow gauge for Conflans, Company K going from Washington, Company L from Menil-la-Tour, Company M and Headquarters from Sorey. L and M Companies with Battalion Headquarters spent the night in an old German "Kantine" at Droitaumont. K Company went straight through to Conflans that day and remained here, being assigned to duties in the shops and roundhouse.

The morning of December 8th Companies L and M marched to Conflans from where they travelled by standard gauge to Pierrepont and Audun-le-Roman respectively. At these places they were engaged in policing the right of way and drilling.

Headquarters Detachment moved to Conflans the next day and on December 9th moved by truck with the office supplies to Metz. Those who were not engaged in battalion work, were assigned to duties in connection with liaison work at the old station or Sablon station. On February 3rd most of headquarters returned to Labry, the remainder following about March 5th.

December 18th M Company returned to railroad work at Conflans as did L Company on February 1st. The French relieved all companies on February 20th and drilling was taken up in earnest. Regimental parades were held about three times weekly up until the time of departure for Le Mans, France.



## 60cm RAILWAYS

### ST MIHIEL - PONT-A-MOISSON SECTOR

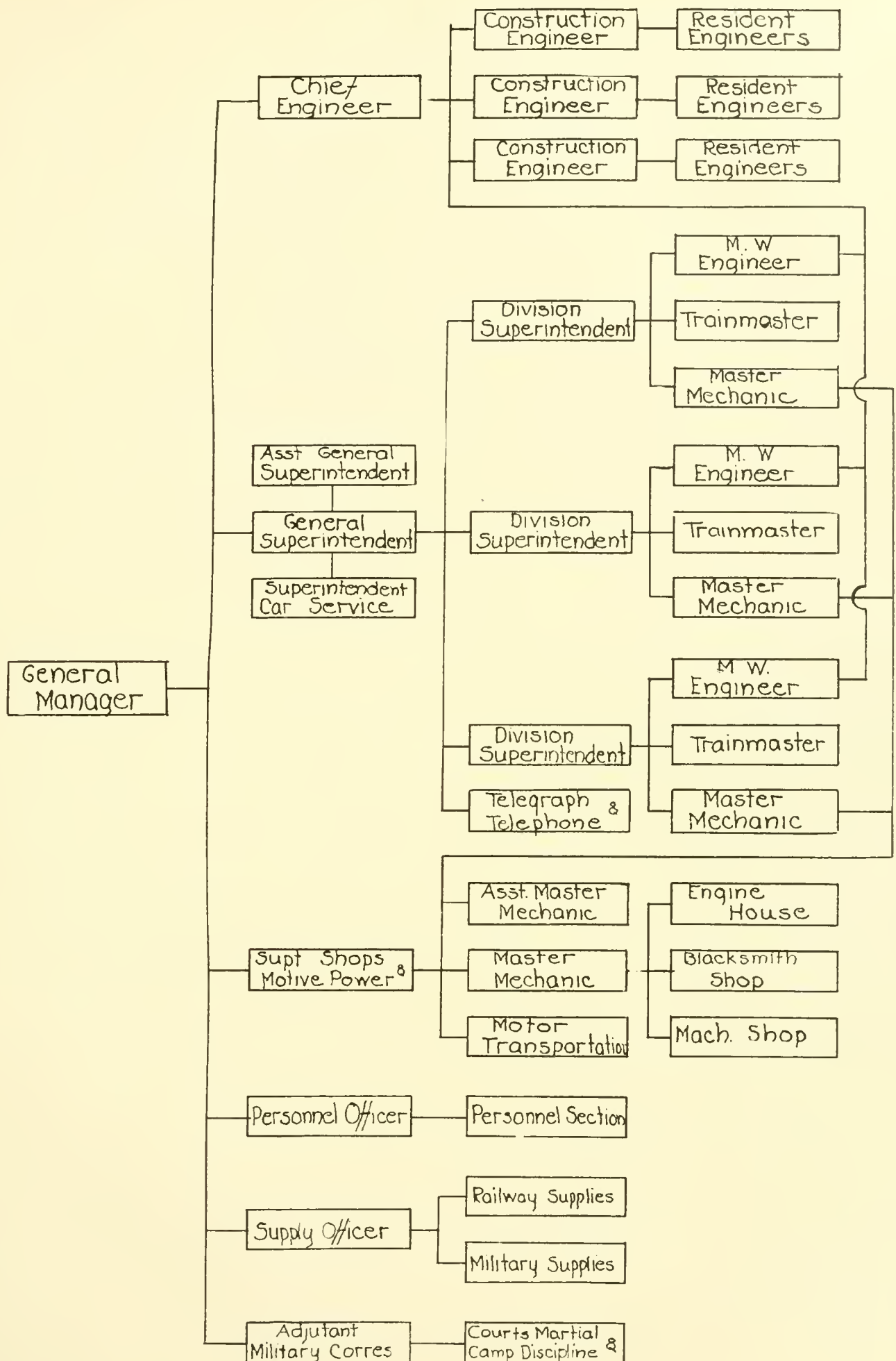
21<sup>ST</sup> REGIMENT ENGINEERS, LIGHT RAILWAY

U. S. ARMY

Latest Revision  
Sept 22, 26, 28, 29  
Oct 2, 7,

Scale  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100





ORGANIZATION AS OF SEPTEMBER 12, 1918

# Organization

By C. S. Elliot

The 21st Regiment Engineers (Light Railway), while a military organization, was organized in much the same manner as an American Railway System, with Executive, Engineering, Operating, Mechanical, Supply and Statistical Departments. The organization was changed in some particulars from time to time, but that existing about the time of the St. Mihiel offensive, is regarded as typical.

Since no commercial business was handled, a Traffic Department was not provided, although the relations between the various Artillery Corps, Quartermaster, Divisional and Engineer organizations and the Light Railway corresponded roughly to those of the large shippers and transportation companies in America. All traffic matters were

etc., of the entire personnel and compiled necessary military reports.

The Engineering Department, under the supervision of the Major 1st Battalion as Chief Engineer, provided for the reconnaissance, location, and construction of new railways and for the rehabilitation of captured German lines, under the jurisdiction of several engineers of construction. For example, at the time of the St. Mihiel offensive, plans had been made for three extensions from our railheads to connections with the German lines, immediately the territory was captured, and an Engineer of Construction was in charge of each project, assisted by Resident Engineers in charge of designated sections. At this time a number of service battalions were attached for construction purposes and the construction engineer had several hundred men under his jurisdiction. General construction, such as the construction of the Sorey Railhead, was also under an Engineer of Construction. The Maintenance of Way Department was under the supervision of (Divisional) Maintenance Engineers, who, while reporting to the Chief Engineer, were under the direct supervision of the Division Superintendent.

The Operating Department was under the jurisdiction of the Major, 2nd Battalion, as General Superintendent. His duties, as on American railways, related to the movement of trains and the maintenance of the property.

In addition to this, he handled all traffic matters, maintaining liaison with the large shippers by means of an Assistant General Superintendent, a Captain on the Headquarters Staff, and through a Superintendent of Transportation (Car Service) had an accurate knowledge of traffic conditions at all times. The Superintendent of Transportation acted as a clearing house for the handling of large orders from "G-4" for ordnance supplies destined to Artillery Units in the area; from engineer dumps for material; from Quartermaster Railhead Offices for subsistence and supplies, and in turn placed the car orders with chief dispatchers of the divisions concerned, who in the name of the Division Superintendent, arranged for movement of the required number of cars to the dumps and railheads. It was the duty of the Superintendent of Transportation to see that priority service was maintained in the order of relative importance and that proper distribution and interchange of equipment was maintained by the divisions.

An Inspector of Transportation, as the name implies, was constantly in touch with the progress of car loading at the dumps and unloading at destination, and any lack of promptitude was reported, that corrective measures might be taken immediately.

It will be noted by the accompanying skeleton diagram that the "Divisional" system of organization was used practically throughout.

The Division Superintendent under the jurisdiction of the General Superintendent had supervision over operation



*Headquarters 21st Engineers, Sorey Gare*

handled by the Operating Department and such accounting as was necessary was handled by the Operating Statistical and Personnel Departments.

Colonel Peek, long our Regimental Commander, afterwards Engineer of Light Railways and Roads, might be considered as the President of our Light Railway System, who formulated matters of general policy in accordance with plans mapped out by the Department of Light Railways Staff.

Lieut.-Colonel Slifer, who succeeded Colonel Peek as Commanding Officer, was General Manager in every sense of the word, with general supervision and direction of all departments.

The Executive Officer, railway correspondence, or Railway Adjutant as he was later known, functioned as an assistant to the General Manager with certain jurisdiction in the railway department of the headquarters organization.

The Regimental Adjutant was in charge of the Regimental Headquarters office, and, acting for the Commanding Officer, enforced camp regulations and discipline, and handled other matters of military character as circumstances required.

The personnel section, under charge of a Personnel Officer, handled the insurance records, allotments, payrolls,



and with certain exceptions, of the maintenance of way, maintenance of equipment, on his division. He controlled the movement of trains through the Trainmaster, Assistant Trainmaster and Chief Train Dispatcher, maintenance of equipment (running repairs) through the Master Mechanic and maintenance of way through the Engineer, Maintenance of Way.

A wrecking crew in charge of a foreman, was located at a convenient point on the division to handle wrecks and serious derailments. Liaison was maintained with the various organizations to further the best interests of the service by means of terminal Trainmasters, or Agents.

The Mechanical Department was under the jurisdiction of a Captain, as Superintendent of Motive Power and Shops, and reported to the General Manager. As Superintendent of Motive Power, he was charged with maintenance of all equipment and power. It should be noted that while the Master Mechanics were under the jurisdiction of the Superintendent of their respective divisions, they reported to the Superintendent of Motive Power on matters pertaining to mechanical maintenance. As the Superintendent of Shops, through a Master Mechanic and Assist-

ant Master Mechanic of Shops, all heavy repairs and assembling of equipment were provided for.

The Supply Department, under the jurisdiction of a Regimental Supply Officer, reporting to the General Manager, had charge of both military and railway supplies. Clothing, subsistence, ordnance supplies, oil, coal and gasoline, locomotives, cars and steel, for a time were secured by requisitions made direct to the department of light railways, although later all requisitions were placed through the Chief Engineer, First Army.

The motor transport service was in charge of a motor transport officer, reporting to the General Manager. Truck transportation, touring cars, motor side cars and courier service were under his supervision and a great variety of service was accomplished not only for our own organization, but for others at different times.

As a whole, once the organization became co-ordinated and accustomed to the peculiar conditions prevailing in "combat railway construction and operation," it functioned its part in the general scheme of campaign in a manner that proved eminently satisfactory.

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## The Engineering Office

The Engineering Department was organized after the 21st Engineers had established headquarters at Sorey, to handle the technical work in connection with the construction and maintenance of light railways in the advance zone including plans for a railhead, or supply base at Sorey. The men for this organization included civil engineers and draftsmen and were called from Companies A and B to which with few exceptions the technical men had been assigned.

The general location for terminal facilities at Sorey was selected. A topographical survey and the general design made and approved by the Chief Engineer. Tentative plans were then prepared for the arrangement of tracks and buildings. A contour map was drawn up and used in adapting to the ground the tentative plans and changing them to minimize the work necessary for their completion.

The plans being completed, an office building was constructed at Sorey and the Engineering Department moved into their section of the building. The field and drafting equipment of the regiment was fairly complete and what was lacking was soon acquired.

The survey for the narrow gauge line between Sorey and Cornieville was completed, a preliminary line run, topography taken and plotted, and from this a paper location was made which stood up very well in the field. Maps were obtained from the French and all available sources and the work in the office progressed rapidly.

Surveys were made and plans and profiles prepared of all the lines under the jurisdiction of the 21st Engineers. Blue prints of these plans were used in making reports to the Chief Engineer.

All proposed construction was very carefully worked up in the office and many lines plotted were not constructed. In fact much of the office work does not show on the

ground, and it was carried out to reduce to a minimum the cost of construction.

Plans were drawn up for dispatchers' huts, warehouses and shops. All this work was standardized and made as portable as possible. Maps were prepared on the mimeograph showing all the light railway lines, stations and sidings. These maps were distributed to all the infantry and artillery organizations in order to perfect the liaison and prevent confusion in the loading and delivery of material and men to the various points of the lines.

As the lines under the jurisdiction of the 21st Engineers increased in numbers it became necessary to revise and subdivide the maps.

The office force was called upon to do many tasks. One of these required by Col. Slifer comprised an elaborate system of graphs from which he could keep minutely informed as to the condition of the lines; exactly how many engines were working or in the shop; how many loaded cars were moved; how many empties returned and when, and in fact a summarization and comparison of conditions on all lines on all divisions.

Accurate work reports were compiled showing the condition and amount of work completed and under construction.

Records were kept of all ballast unloaded at the various railheads. Most of this material was shipped in over the standard gauge roads and had to be checked and the *ordre de transports* sent to the Chief Engineer's Office for payment. During the St. Mihiel drive progress on the various lines was at all times available. While this drive was going on, reconnaissance parties, each of two men, traversed all the German lines acquired, reporting on their condition, grades, and the feasibility of operation in connection with the system. A general map was prepared and lines open for operation were shown; possible future connections were

indicated by dotted lines. Railheads and supply base changes were also a feature of the map.

After the drive was finished and operation well organized and co-ordinated, work assumed normal proportions. At the end of September, the regiment received notification that it was to move with the First Army and assume control of the light railways in the Argonne Sector. All plans, reports, etc., of the Toul Sector were gradually turned over to the 12th Engineers, they having been designated to take over this work.

On October 10th the office was moved to Vraincourt and the following morning tables were set up and work started on a plan, showing all the narrow gauge railways in the Argonne Sector. Maps were sorted and rearranged; the office was systematized so that any information desired could be furnished without loss of time. To facilitate the use of the map file, an index was compiled of all towns, roads and forts in the sector and covering the territory occupied by the Germans, likely to be taken by the First Army in the future.

The important work of the first two weeks was the recording on maps all data received from the reconnaissance parties which were following the infantry and reporting upon the conditions of the captured lines. These reports covered the curves, grades, weight of rails, and number of men necessary to rehabilitate the various lines. With this information on hand, the Colonel decided the lines to be used as trunk lines and the general scheme of operations. A progress report of the work in the field of the regiment and the other units attached to the 21st Engineers was made to Headquarters, First Army, every day at 6:30 P. M., and included a statement of lines in condition for

operation up to 6:00 P. M. each day, and every night ammunition and rations would be billed by the Q. M. C. and Ordnance Department to the end of the rehabilitated lines.

Complete operation reports were made showing number of cars delivered to the divisions at the front. The office was open from 7:00 A. M. to 10:30 P. M. and during those busy times there were no holidays. Unlike at Sorey, there was very little drafting or engineering work. The lines were moving forward too fast and rule of thumb methods prevailed. Just before the armistice all work slowed down and there was practically nothing to do. Christmas nearing, cards of greeting were fabricated and dispatched to cheer those at home.

Colonel Slifer was injured and left for the hospital just as the work came to a standstill. Soon the regiment moved to Conflans and assumed control of standard gauge lines from Conflans to Audun-le-Roman, Conflans to Longuyon, Longuyon to Audun-le-Roman and Baroncourt to Audun-le-Roman.

The office organization was enlarged by several men from the Third Battalion, this unit having joined the regiment at Conflans. The standard gauge work increased the amount of drafting and tracing and the office became very busy. Reports were transferred to an Accounting Department authorized by G. H. Q. and handled all reports of maintenance and operation.

The French began to assume control of the various lines and work gradually diminished until the 21st Regiment was finally released from duty and moved to the barracks at Labry. There the old office organization assumed the work on the History and all that are left are busily engaged, assisting in its compilation.

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## Surveys, Reconnaissance and Location

By Lieutenant C. S. Henning

The "Specifications for the Construction of Light Railways of 60 C.M. Gauge," in use at the time of the arrival of the 21st Engineers in the advance zone and of their beginning light railway work, contained the following instructions on "Location, Alignment and Grades":

### *Location.*

The location of a line will be determined by its availability for the distribution of munitions, road material, rations, engineer material, etc., and its possible means of access to objectives within the enemy's lines.

The railhead on broad gauge having been selected, the survey for light railway will be carried forward with a view to securing:

1st. The lightest gradients and curvature which the topography of the country affords, keeping in mind a minimum of work and rapidity of construction.

2nd. Cover from the enemy's direct observations.

3rd. A line as inconspicuous as possible. For this reason the width of clearing in wooded areas must be reduced to a minimum and grade line should be laid to give the shallowest cuts and fills consistent with proper drainage.

4th. A line avoiding the use of streets and highways as a right of way, if a location can be made elsewhere.

### *Alignment.*

Curves should be as light as can be fitted to the ground, to give a minimum of excavation and embankment: curves sharper than 50 meter radius ( $35\frac{1}{2}$  degree) should be avoided if possible and sharp curves should not be located at foot of long steep grades.

Curves in opposite direction should have a minimum of 50 feet tangent between curve points.

### *Grades.*

Maximum grade should, if possible, be limited to a 4 per cent; in any case it should be as easy as the topography of the country permits, keeping in mind that there should be no deep cuts or high embankments, as these two conditions would prevent rapidity of construction.

These general principles of location were adhered to in all the light railway work of the regiment except as experience proved variations from them desirable. This applies especially to the maximum grade allowed. It was found that a 4 per cent gradient was entirely too high for



operation with either steam locomotives or gas tractors and every effort was made to locate the main or trunk lines with maximum grades of 1.5% and secondary lines with 2.5 or 3.0%.

The ideal light railway system which our location would develop was thought to be a network consisting of: 1st,



*Narrow Gauge Wye at Neuf Etang*

trunk lines from the railheads on broad gauge to points as close to the front line trenches as the cover from direct observation would permit; 2nd, cross lines connecting the railheads; 3rd, a series of cross lines connecting the trunk lines at points about five miles back of the front line; 4th, a third series of cross lines connecting the trunk lines and running as close as possible to the field artillery positions; 5th, the feeders or spurs running from any of the above elements of the system to the artillery positions, into the trenches, or to any point where the delivery of personnel, rations, munitions, or material was desired.

That this ideal was never fully realized was due to the fact that the regiment was engaged in the development, improvement and expansion of light railways taken over from the French rather than the creation of an entirely new system.

In our first survey work the English system of measurements was used, but experience soon proved the superiority of the metric system and it was adopted.

The first location work was on the line connecting the proposed railhead at Sorey with the existing 60 c.m. system at Cornieville, a distance of eight kilometers. This work was done in accordance with standard American practice, using transit, level and topography parties on both preliminary and location surveys. Several preliminaries were run, topography plotted, paper location projected and final location run in the field and cross sectioned for construction. The maximum gradient on this line was 1.5%. In rounding a sharp rock point at Sorey it was necessary to use on 20 degree (English) curve but all other curves were 12 degrees or lighter. Later experience in the operation of this heavy traffic demonstrated that the care taken in its location was justified.

While this work was under way other surveys were being made for lines of a different character: the Nauginsard-Hamouville and the Nauginsard-Broussey lines, or "M" and "K" lines, being secondary lines connecting existing trunk lines. These were emergency lines to facilitate operation in case of the destruction of one of the existing lines by enemy fire or to relieve congestion of traffic by permitting the operation of loops with trains running in one direction only.

On account of the lack of surveying instruments to equip the locating party as well as the fact that a con-

siderable force was available for immediate construction, other methods were used in the location of these lines. Part of the work was done with a transit; part by plotting topography and an army sketchboard, making paper projection and running lines in "by eye"; and part using a prismatic compass and hand level. The use of a compass, however, by a man carrying a steel helmet and a pistol, and working near the artillery, was not a decided success.

The same methods of location were used on the location of battery spurs and gave very satisfactory results. Decauville curve and switch tables were available and were supplemented by other tables computed by members of the survey parties.

It was while engaged on this work that we gained knowledge at first hand of Heimie's methodical ways. One or two men could work under direct observation out of rifle range, with perfect safety, but as soon as four men became "bunched," over came a "seventy-seven." This caused a change in our "tactics of surveying." Two steel tapes were tied together to increase the distance between chainmen. Whenever a hub or transit point was set, the chainmen moved ahead two or three stations before the transitman moved up and the level and topography parties usually did their work on the day following the completion of the transit work; this kept a very small force under observation and those well scattered. The level rods and range poles were painted with olive drab paint to make them as inconspicuous as possible.

From this time until the beginning of the St. Mihiel offensive a great number of other surveys were made, the methods used being one of those described before. Experience proved that when the time available for location was sufficient the results obtained by a careful preliminary survey, as in standard gauge work, were justified, but, that where time was an element a very good location could be obtained by using a Locke level for levels, lining in by eye for alignment, with curves located by offsets or externals.

Among the lines located were the Aulnois-Vignot, Sorey-Pagny, Jouy Cut Off, Leonval-LaFouine, Domgermain-Ecrouves, and a number of lines in the Baccarat Sector, Azerailles-Magnieres, Baccarat-Rambervillers, Baccarat-Neuf Maisons, Merviller-Vacqueville, St. Clement-Gerbeviller and others.

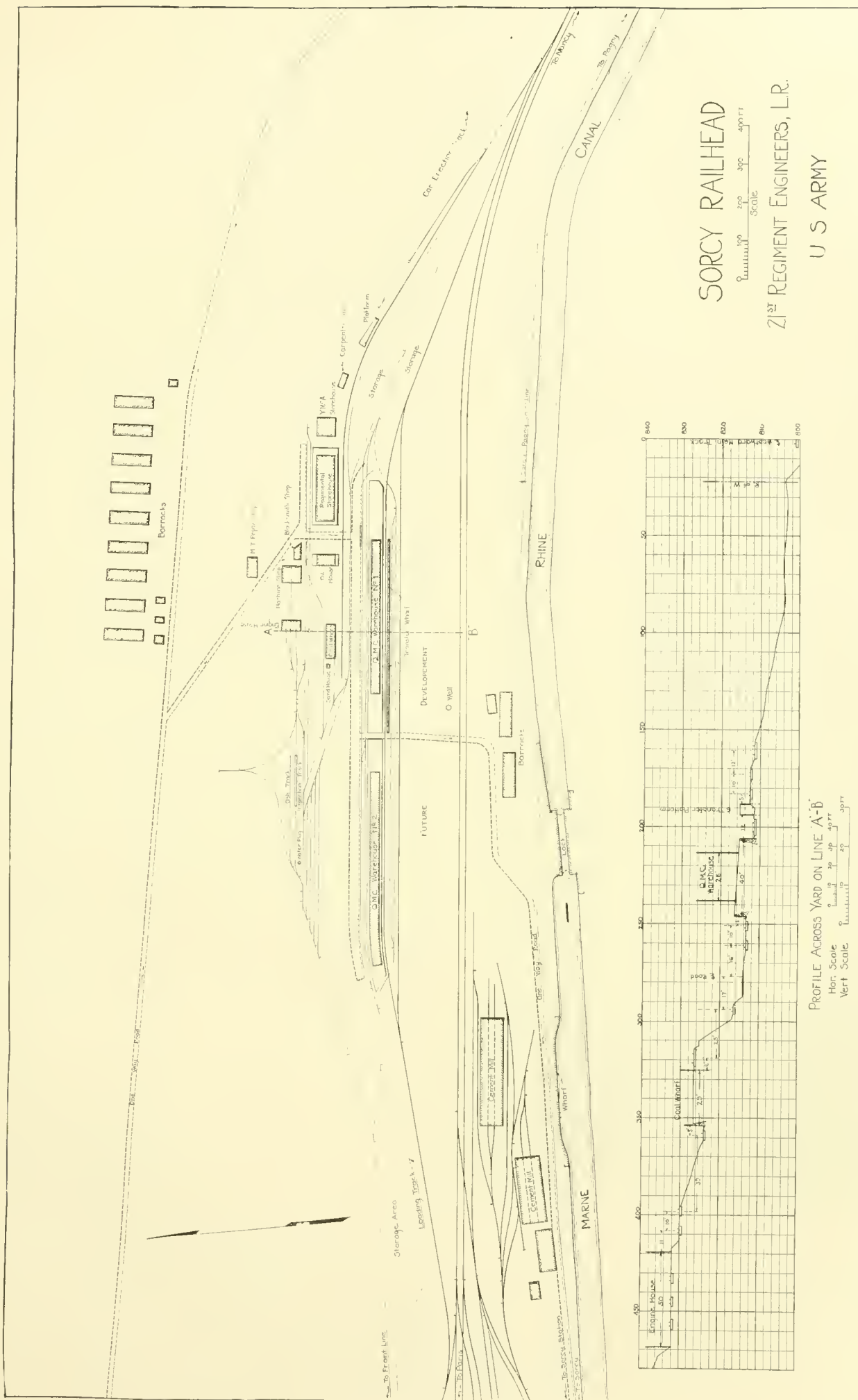


*Tramway Exchange at Broussey*

During this time a great deal of reconnaissance work had been done for lines to be extended to a connection with the German lines during the St. Mihiel offensives. These lines were projected on the French 1:10000 topographical maps, checked by field reconnaissance from the point of leaving the existing line to the front line trenches and a study of "No Man's Land" from the trenches and observa-







tion posts. The location started as soon as the infantry went "over the top," consisted of stretching white trench tape on the center line; tangents lined in by eye and curves staked by offsets.

After the St. Mihiel offensive there was very little work done on the location of new lines. From this time until after the signing of the armistice the work of the survey parties consisted in reconnaissance of captured lines, estimating work necessary to put them in shape for operation and inventorying captured material.

The experience of the writer in light railway location leads him to the conclusion that the main trunk lines from the railroad to the artillery positions should be located with the same care and with the use of the same principles of location as in standard gauge railroad location; adding,

of course, the principles peculiar to combat railways, i.e. freedom from direct observation by the enemy, possibility of future extensions to objectives within the enemy's lines, etc.

That these main lines should be located with gradients not exceeding 1.5% and curves not sharper than 50 meter radius.

That secondary lines, battery feeders, etc., can be located and well located by the much simpler methods described before.

That the secondary lines should have gradients not exceeding 2.5%, although in very exceptional cases 3% or 3.5% may be allowed. No curve sharper than 30 meter radius should be allowed and if at all practical, none sharper than 50 meter radius.

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## Sorey Yard

By Lieutenant Gressit

One of the outstanding features of the work of this Regiment was the construction of the Sorey Yard or Rail-head. It is noteworthy because of the character of the work as well as because of its importance as a part of the system of narrow gauge lines supplying the front in the Toul Sector. No other feature involved so great a variety of work and no other received more careful consideration in the adoption of a general plan and in the development of its details.

Prior to the arrival of the Twenty-first in this sector, the site for the railhead had been selected—an area lying north of the main line of the *Chemin de Fer de l'Est*, a short distance east of Sorey Gare. A preliminary survey of the site had been made and tentative plans were started. With the arrival of this regiment in the latter part of February, 1918, these preliminary studies were hurried, the plans were radically revised and finally brought into the form followed in a general way in the construction.



*Quartermaster Warehouse at Sorey Gare*

In order to properly adapt the general scheme to the ground it became necessary to have a detailed topographic map of the whole area; and accordingly a survey party was started on this work February 28th. The map was plotted to a scale of fifty feet to the inch and was made the basis for all the studies in the working out of the various details of the yard arrangement. A longitudinal profile through

the yard showed rolling ground; the cross-section normal to that showed a slope increasing from level near the standard gauge railroad to about 7% at the upper side of the narrow gauge yard.

The plan on the opposite page shows the yard as built—the plan was developed as the work went along, following in general the scheme originally adopted, but differing much in detail. The main feature in the plan is naturally the provision for transfer of Quartermaster stores from standard to narrow gauge—the large warehouses and platforms with necessary complement of tracks. Of practically equal importance were the terminal facilities provided for handling the narrow gauge equipment.

The first work of construction was on the regimental storehouse, intended for handling all supplies for the regiment itself. Quantities of tools and other engineer property were brought to Sorey with the regiment and at Sorey Gare were unloaded and distributed at great disadvantage. The continued arrival of these tools and supplies was a considerable handicap at the start, and consequently especial effort was made to rush the completion of the storehouse and the standard gauge siding serving it. At the start, the pick, shovel and wheelbarrow were the only means available for the grading; all the work on the storehouse and its siding was handled by these tools. On each side was a rubble masonry retaining wall, with earth filling between; the masonry was of limestone, quarried by the Twenty-first about one mile from the site, set in lime mortar. Much difficulty was experienced on first acquaintance with this French mortar because of its slow setting; better results were obtained later, after some experiments had been made with various mixtures of portland cement. The building was of frame construction with corrugated iron roof, of a type standard for A. E. F. warehouses. It was first planned to be 50'x112', but during construction was increased to a length of 168' to meet the expanding needs of the regiment. Offices were built in one end, and on completion this became the center of the supply department, for rations as well as equipment of all kinds. On May 9th



the building and accessories were completed, including the standard gauge siding, which was 1,700 feet long, of 50 lb. rail spiked to wooden ties and ballasted with gravel.

Work on other parts of the yard was started and carried on as forces and equipment were made available. The earthwork presented the greatest difficulties, because of adverse weather conditions during the months of March, April, and May, and also because of the lack of tools other than those mentioned above during the early part of the



*Narrow Gauge Speeder*

job. After a time, teams were obtained and with plow, slip, and wheel-scrapers, better progress was maintained. No serious difficulties were met with in any of the excavation, only small quantities of loose rock being found in the deepest cuts, the surface soil being underlain with a fine, compact gravel. It was possible to use the plow for loosening the material in all cases; scrapers were used for hauls of moderate length, longer hauls being handled by means of Decauville track (60 c.m. gauge) and dump cars, with mules as the motive power to start with until gasoline tractors arrived. In the design of the yard every effort was made so to fit the yard arrangement and grades to the ground as to balance the cut and fill and to obviate long hauls in disposing of excavated material. How well this was accomplished may be indicated by the fact that only one borrow pit was opened, and that for a quantity of only about two hundred cubic yards to complete the filling for the standard gauge tracks at the east end of the yard; further, no quantity of material was hauled more than four hundred feet, except that at the end of the job some excess excavation was used for raising a sag in the grade of the main track a short distance from the yard.

The regimental storehouse being the base of supplies not only for the corps in the vicinity of Sorey, but also for those stationed at other points toward the front and engaged in construction and operation, the program for construction contemplated the immediate completion of the 60 c.m. running track through the yard from the storehouse to the main line leading out from the yard. This was accomplished, for this running track was ready when the storehouse and its standard gauge siding were completed, and was put into service for running ration and supply trains.

Next on the schedule were the blacksmith and machine shops, for they would be of material assistance in expediting much of the work incident to construction—repairs of tools and equipment, the making of special parts, crossing frogs, switches, switch stands, etc. The blacksmith shop was 15'x30', frame, open on one side, immediately adjoining the machine shop, which was of standard frame construction with corrugated iron roof, 42'x50'. The roof trusses in the latter building were specially reinforced to

enable them to carry the countershafting for the machinery installed.

There was little difference in the importance of the remaining elements of the plan; all were needed for satisfactory operation, and it was desirable to reach that goal at the earliest possible date. Work proceeded on the whole layout with this in view, aiming to bring all to completion about the same time, but irregularities in the arrival of materials or other varying factors affected the plan. Lumber, hardware, and standard gauge track material were the items giving great concern in the matter of delays.

There was an abundance of narrow gauge track material on hand at the start, 25 lb. rail, wooden ties, and spikes, but only a few American switches. In their stead it was finally necessary to use 20 lb. switches of English make. The narrow gauge track was built according to standards issued by the Department of Light Railways and Roads, using wooden ties throughout the yard. The minimum radius for all curves (including switches) was 30 meters; it was found that when the track was well built on a good bed of ballast and properly maintained, curves of this radius give no trouble with the equipment in use. Gravel ballast was used for all track; brought in on standard gauge cars and unloaded directly where needed for standard gauge tracks or transferred and delivered by Decauville dump cars for the narrow gauge tracks. Various grades were used in the yard to fit the ground or to meet the various crossings and connections, but a grade of 1.50% was not exceeded in any of the tracks except the Wye, that being made 2.50% to reduce the grading for the tail track.

It was aimed to give complete facilities for handling the yard work and for giving proper care to the motive power. The four yard tracks were used mostly for empties, loaded trains being moved directly from the loading tracks without further yard work. Reference to the plan will show the arrangement of engine facilities, with access to the enginehouse by connections leading directly in and out or by way of the inspection track, also with Wye and water plug conveniently located. The enginehouse was of the standard construction, 28'x50' with three tracks, one of which led into the machine shop. These two buildings were placed, and the grading completed, so that extensions could be made to both, but it was not found necessary in the time they were in operation. One of the enginehouse



*Narrow Gauge Yards at Sorey Gare*

tracks was built with a combined inspection pit and drop pit for removing driving wheels. A more detailed description of these shops and mechanical equipment is given elsewhere in this book.

For handling the oil supply there was provided the oil house 28'x50', served by both standard and narrow gauge. The coal wharf was simply an open platform 30'x90' earth

fill and rubble retaining wall along the narrow gauge side, the standard gauge being elevated several feet above it. The standard gauge track was extended beyond the platform on a timber trestle provided with an apron or chute for direct transfer of coal to be forwarded to outlying points on the narrow gauge system.

The facilities provided for Quartermaster supplies included first the timber platform 6' wide and 400' long for direct transfer from standard to narrow gauge cars. It was built between the two tracks and they were at such heights that car floors on each track would be at the level of the platform. Next there were the main platforms, earth fill supported by rubble masonry retaining walls, 40' wide by 600' and 700' long. The warehouses on these platforms were of the standard frame construction with rolling doors and were respectively 25'x400' and 25'x500'. The bulk of the supplies handled over these platforms was of clothing, rations, forage; some engineer supplies were delivered through this railhead but mainly from stock-piles located in the open areas along the tracks.

The various retaining walls totaled a length of 3,500 feet, about half being four feet high and the remainder from six to seven feet high.

The water supply for the yard and for the adjacent camp was drawn from a well that was sunk just below the yard near the main line of the Est Railroad. This well was 12 feet in diameter and 42 feet deep, lined with rubble masonry. It gave a plentiful supply of potable water, serving not only the terminal, but also, by means of tank cars, troops and water stations at points near the front where good water could not be obtained. Details of the

installation of pump and distributing system are given in another article.

Mention should also be made of the fact that surfaced roads were built as shown on the plan, with the idea of making the warehouses accessible to motor trucks and using them as supplementary to the narrow-gauge for delivery of supplies. A pole line was erected to bring in current, and all the buildings were wired for electric light. An item of incidental work was the taking care of several sewers encountered in grading for tracks at the west end of the yard; it involved the reconstruction of two manholes and lowering several hundred feet of concrete sewer.

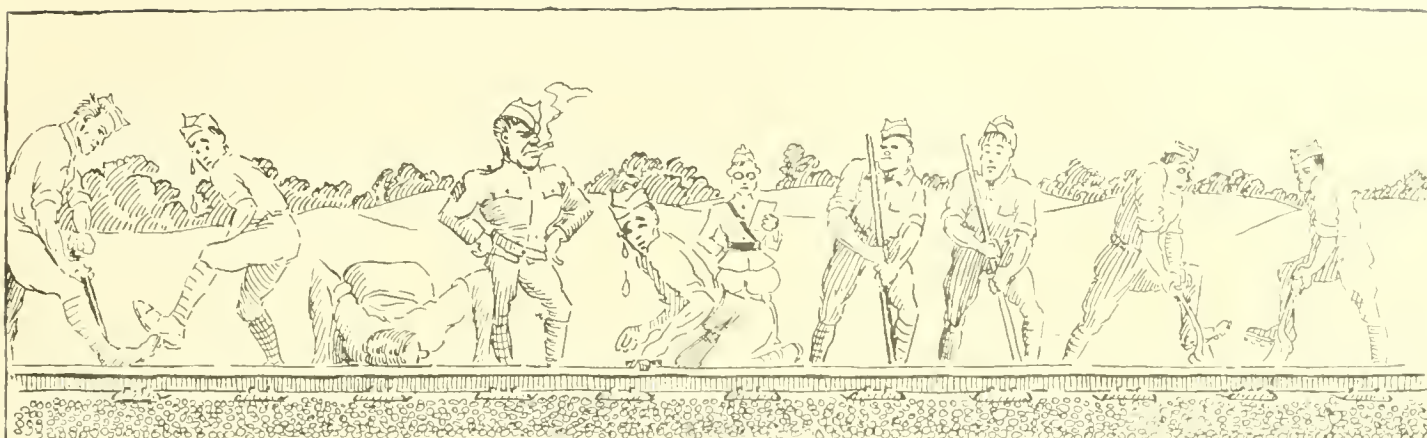
It might be noted that throughout the period of construction and subsequent operation the Germans made frequent visits with observation planes and both day and nights visits with bombers, but at no time did they succeed in landing a bomb close enough to damage the railhead.

With the exception of Warehouse No. 2 (completed in August), the entire yard was ready for operation by the middle of June. From that time on there was a constant and heavy flow of business through this railhead, more especially in the weeks just prior to the St. Mihiel offensive. It served well in this preparation, but its value was greatly diminished when the rapid success of the "drive" left it so far in the rear, further than could be continuously and effectively operated by the "soixante." Other and more advanced railheads were put into service and supplanted Sorcy in the place of importance.

The Twenty-first later looked back upon Sorcy with regret, for it found no other terminal so complete or so well arranged.







## Light Railway Maintenance

Lieutenant H. W. Dun, Jr.

The first light railway track maintenance work done by the 21st Engineers was on the French lines in the sector northwest of Toul. Forces were placed on the track late in March, 1918, with instructions to put it in the best possible condition. The track was in fair condition for the equipment operated by the French. About four inches of cinder ballast was under the ties. The fills were less than six feet in width and the cuts were narrow. In many places it was not possible to give the tracks a raise until the road bed had been widened. A considerable portion of the track was laid on the highway grade so near the edge that the shoulder was very narrow. Along the highway the track was so low that the mud from the roadway drained off on the ballast and then over the tracks to the ditch. This resulted in a very slippery rail. The highways had good deep ditches so the sub-grade drainage was excellent. Practically all of the tracks needed a lift of two inches to put it in good surface. Along the highway it was necessary to give the track a six inch lift to keep it clear of the highway mud.

The track was French Decauville section, 60 centimeter gauge, with rail weighing 16 lbs. per yard riveted to steel ties. There were 8 ties to each section, standard sections were 5 meters long. There were a few sections  $11\frac{1}{4}$  meters and  $21\frac{1}{2}$  meters in length furnished. Curved sections of 20, 30, 50 and 100 meters radius, 5 meters,  $21\frac{1}{2}$  meters and  $11\frac{1}{4}$  meters in length were used. Switches were made up with turn and curves of 20 meters and 30 meters radius. The 30 meter curve switch was made in four sections which assembled had a length of 8.75 meters on the tangent. The 20 meter radius curve switch was made in three sections which assembled had a length of 7.50 meters on the tangent. Thus when it was necessary to put in a 30 meter radius switch or a 20 meter radius switch all that was necessary was to take up two five-meter sections, lay the switch and a  $11\frac{1}{4}$  meter or  $21\frac{1}{2}$  meter section as the case might be. The French track and switches were well made and had sufficient tie bearing surface to carry French equipment satisfactorily without more than 4" of ballast on almost any soil.

The French steam locomotives weighed 12 tons, had a low center of gravity and a rigid wheel base of but 90 c.m. The American steam locomotives weighed  $17\frac{1}{4}$  tons, had a

higher center of gravity than the French and a rigid wheel base of 175 centimeters.

Although it was not possible to distribute any ballast until late in May, by May first, when the first American locomotives and cars were put into service, the line and surface was in fair condition.

When the first American locomotive made its appearance, the size, height, and width astounded the track men. They realized that their work was cut out for them to prevent derailments.

To get sufficient clearance for these locomotives (their width over all was seven feet) it was necessary to change the alignment in some cases and cut down trees in others.

The first trip from Menil la Tour to Cornieville was without mishap until the latter place was reached where the engine derailed on a 20 meter radius curve. Subsequent experience proved that these locomotives would not run on a curve of less than 30 meters radius. Practically always when these locomotives derailed on curves the rear driver on the inside of the curve was the first to mount the rail.

This tendency was of course increased by any elevation on the curve. Accordingly the elevation on all curves was reduced to 1". This was always sufficient for the speeds allowed. As more lines were turned over to the 21st Engineers by the French it became necessary to strengthen the tracks, put in ballast and reduce the elevation on curves.

In June the American built line from Sorey to Cornieville was put in operation. Most of the line was laid with American rail weighing 25 pounds to the yard, with wood ties according to standards of the Department of Light Railways. There was six inches of ballast under the ties. About two kilometers of this line was ballasted with cinders. After this line had been in operation two months, speeds as high as twenty miles per hour could be made with safety and the maintenance required was very light.

For the purpose of track maintenance the line was divided into sections about six kilometers in length on the heavy traffic lines and about eight kilometers in length on the light traffic lines. A light traffic line was one on which only gasoline locomotives operated. A squad under a corporal or a private was the section gang. Sergeants

would generally have two or more section gangs under them. A lieutenant would generally be in charge of all the maintenance work done by a company.

The tools and equipment of a section gang were:

1 square point shovel per man.	2 cold cuts.
1 tamping pick per man.	2 8 lb. mauls.
2 track wrenches.	2 red flags.
2 monkey wrenches.	1 white lantern.
1 hand car.	1 hand axe.
6 hack saw blades.	1 long handled axe.
	1 water pail.

All cutting of rail was done with a hack saw, as the light steel was extremely tough and almost impossible to break cleanly.



*Cornicville Yards*

On all lines a man was designated as track walker on each section. His duty was to inspect the section daily, noting the condition of switches, line and surface, and to tighten bolts. On the light French steel these bolts were constantly working loose.

Whenever possible each squad lived within the area of its own section. This was not always advisable unless there was some established mess to which the squad could be attached for rations. In at least one case, however, a group of ten men cooked their own meals and kept one man of the gang four hours per day from track work.

Section gangs went to and from their work on hand cars. These cars are well built. The only trouble with them was that they were geared too high for the grades found on light railway work. Officers and non-commissioned officers in charge of maintenance got over the line on gasoline track speeders and cars.

On August 20th the immediate light railway preparations for the St. Mihiel offensive were begun. The two construction companies had previous to this time supplied most of the personnel for maintenance work. The remainder had been supplied by the operating companies. Now the construction forces, A and B Companies with their many experienced track men, were entirely relieved from maintenance work to attend to more pressing tasks and track maintenance was put entirely up to the operating companies. Fortunately at this time each of three operating companies were reinforced by a company of the 12th Engineers. With these men it was found possible in spite of the heavy traffic necessitating many crews to put one man on maintenance to two kilometers of tracks.

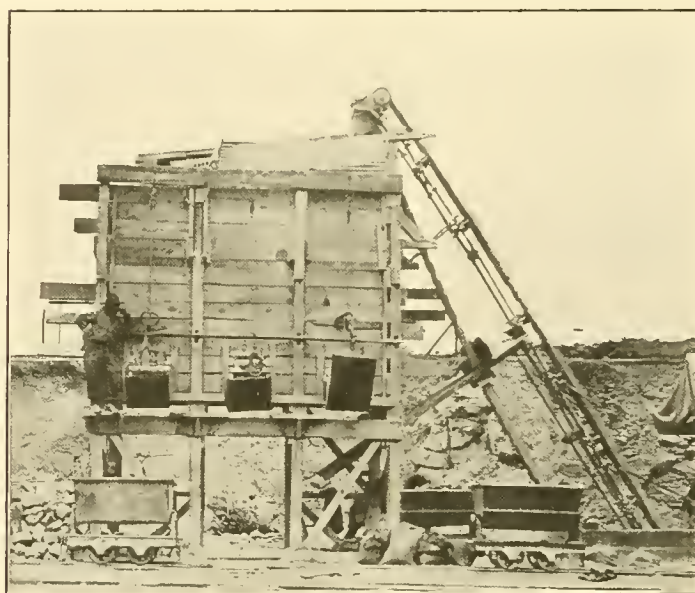
The heavy traffic lines had been well ballasted by this time and in many many places 4" x 6" x 4' 6" wood ties had been placed under the Decauville rail on curves and places where it had been difficult to maintain good surface. Where the track was laid on the edge of the road small open drains built of two wood ties, placed on edge and braced apart with struts had been placed at intervals of

fifty feet. These took care of the surface drainage from the road.

From a maintenance and operating standpoint location of light railways alongside of a highway was objectionable. First because heavy motor trucks running at high speed would frequently push the tracks badly out of line, pound it out of surface and cut away the ballast on the road side. Second, the passing road traffic would splash mud over the tracks, clogging up the ballast and making the rails slippery. Third, on account of the heavy road traffic collisions between passing trucks and trains were frequent. Fourth, highways are much more frequent targets for enemy fire than light railways are, so danger of traffic interruption on account of shelling is increased by roadside location.

The repair of damage done by enemy artillery was the least of the track men's troubles. A single shell would rarely do damage that could not be repaired within half an hour after the track men had arrived on the scene. The most notable cases of this sort were seven hits on the Hamonville line during the battle of Xivray on June 16th and six hits near Bernecourt one day in April. The line was repaired in each case in less than six hours.

The maintenance forces had the duty of clearing up all wrecks and rerailing equipment where the job could not be handled by the train crew with their rerailing frogs. For this purpose a wrecking car well supplied with blocking ties, rail, jacks, axes, bars, tackle and one right hand and one left hand switch was held in readiness at the division maintenance headquarters. The heaviest job was the righting of engines that had tipped over. The general method was to first place a platform of ties for the engine to rest on after being righted. Later large pieces of boiler plate were used instead of these ties to form the platform. While the platform was prepared a "dead man" would be placed at right angles to the locomotive. Then by two track



*Rock Crusher at Sorcy Gare*

jacks lifting against the side of the steam dome the locomotive would be raised to a 45 degree angle. The completion of the right would be effected by a block and tackle connected to the steam dome and the "dead man" the pull being furnished by the locomotive of the wreck train.

After the St. Mihiel drive the track men had their



chance to see how the Germans handled their track work. In the area occupied the enemy had three types of track:

1. Track laid with wood ties, rail weighing forty to eighty pounds per yard, built from material salvaged from standard and meter gauge railways. This track was ballasted with stone and required no maintenance work.

2. Sectional track five meters long, rail weighing eighteen pounds per yard, ten ties to each five meter section. The steel ties on this track were longer, wider and deeper than the ties used on the French or American sectional tracks. This track was well ballasted with stone and required little maintenance. On the above mentioned types of track the road bed standards were the same as those of the American Department of Light Railways. The German sectional track was better than the French or American sectional track on account of longer ties and closer tie spacing. These lines were better ballasted on the average than ours were. No difficulty was experienced in operating American equipment over these tracks.

3. Lines built with sectional tracks weighing but twelve pounds per yard and little ballast. This track was only good for operation with tractors and had to be relaid with heavier steel and ballasted before steam locomotives could be operated on it.

When the 21st Engineers arrived in the Argonne-Meuse sector, October 10th, the situation was found to be as follows: Track from railheads to old front line was 16 pounds. Decauville steel poorly ballasted in many places, fills and cuts narrow, curves with elevation excessive for operation with American equipment. On the French portion of the lines, grades were very heavy and curves numerous.

Track from end of French lines to German lines, built by Americans over "no man's land" wide road bed, but

green, well located, laid with American 25-pound sectional track and not more than 2 inches of ballast under ties on the average. German tracks, mostly German 18-pound standard sectional track, some track on rotten wood ties with 30-pound rail, square joints, all the curvature on curves being at the joints—all this track was poorly ballasted and the road bed was narrow. There was some German track with 75-pound rail and sound ties which gave good service after damage done by enemy demolition detachment had been repaired.

No men of the operating companies being available for maintenance, work companies of the 59th Pioneer Infantry, the 11th Engineers, the 16th Engineers and the 604th Engineers were assigned to this work. The construction companies were never given opportunity to put newly occupied German track in shape before being moved on to other work. The maintenance forces really carried on the construction after it was possible to start operation on the road. In this sector about fifteen men per kilometer of track were required for maintenance. The old French lines were improved as much as possible without putting in ballast. The American and German built lines were in some places given the required amount of ballast. A complete job could not be done on account of the heavy traffic from October 10th until November 11th, making it impossible to move sufficient ballast. All sorts of makeshifts were resorted to. Mine timbers were used as ties and spaced close together where ballast was shy. Ballast of very poor quality, consisting of disintegrated limestone mixed with clay was dug from pits near the line and broken by hand and carried to the tracks. This track was never good. Derailments were frequent, but, nevertheless, heavy traffic was moved over the lines due to the devotion of the operating and maintenance forces concerned.

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## Work of the 28th Engineers in Connection With That of the 21st Engineers

By D. A. Leisher

Ballast is always a problem on every railroad, even under normal conditions and in war times in the zone of advance it is greatly accentuated.

The 21st Engineers (L. R.) was organized as a maintenance and operation railroad organization, but no special arrangements were made for a quarrying organization. For this reason it was necessary to get ballast from outside sources. A detachment of the 28th Engineers (quarry) was attached to the 21st Engineers (L. R.) for duty at Sorey Gare, Meuse.

The 28th Engineers (quarry) was mobilized at Camp Meade, Md., and the organization began November 23, 1917, and by the latter part of January, 1918, Companies A, B and the First Battalion Headquarters were completed.

On January 25th this organization was ordered to prepare for overseas service. They embarked at Hoboken, N. J., on the transport Finland February 7, 1918, and steamed out of the harbor on February 10, 1918, arriving at the Port of St. Nazaire on February 25th. Here they were attached to the 17th Engineers for duty until quarry sites could be secured.

As rapidly as suitable quarry sites could be secured, detachments were dispatched to operate them. On March 7th the first detachment of forty left to operate a quarry at Boucq. Other detachments were sent out as follows: March 12th, detachment of seventy-five to operate Villaneuve quarry, near St. Nazaire; a detachment of thirty-five to operate a quarry at Sorey Gare, Meus; a detachment of fifty to operate a quarry at Mandres; a detachment of twenty to Neufchateau for construction work; March 15th, a detachment of 100 to operate quarries near Is-sur-Tille and Langres; a detachment of thirty-five to Sorey Gare to strengthen the detachment previously sent there; March 17th, a detachment of ninety to operate a quarry at Bazilles, a detachment of forty-five men to operate a quarry at Gondrecourt; March 29th, the Battalion Headquarters and the remaining men left St. Nazaire to establish headquarters at Sorey Gare.

On arrival of the first detachment of the 28th Engineers at Sorey Gare work was at once begun erecting barracks and opening up a quarry.

The rock in this quarry was a soft limestone and was easily quarried and crushed as it was all stratified rock.

full of fissures and seams. It was very good when used for "Telford base" roads, but as a surfacing rock it was too soft to stand up under the heavy truck traffic. As ballast for narrow gauge railways it was far superior to the loose rock taken from fields, which the light railway engineers had to use when they first started the construction of the line from Sorey to Cornieville.



*Repairing Narrow Gauge Track Cut By Shell Fire*

The work of the quarry had not progressed very far when all the men were put to work making a cut for the main line of the narrow gauge from Sorey to Cornieville. This cut was adjacent to the quarry and was the same kind of rock. A small portable crusher was set up temporarily and the rock from the cut was crushed and used for ballast. By building a bin close to the track it was possible to run the 60 c. m. cars under the chutes.

Early in May the first shipments of crushed rock for highway construction were made. Rock was graded in three sizes: Rock for Telford base, crushed rock for ballast on railways and fine stone for surfacing on roads.

After the rock cut was finished the quarry was operated continuously and a more or less permanent plant erected and worked to its maximum by a double shift in order to supply, as far as possible, the large demand for rock. Most of the crushed rock was loaded on narrow gauge cars from the chutes at the bin, although a large part of the heavy stone was loaded on standard gauge cars and on motor trucks.

Early in July another quarry was opened about one kilometer north of Sorey Gare. This plant was operated on the same basis as the one described before, except that the shipments were made entirely by narrow gauge, and the greater part of the output was crushed rock.

These quarries were closed November 26th upon receipt of orders to salvage the machinery. In the latter part of December, pursuant to orders, the quarry was again opened and under operation January 18, 1919, and has continued to the present, March 1, 1919.

The quarry at Boucq was operated continually from the middle of March until the 9th of July. No machinery was operated at this site and the drilling was all done by hand. No attempt was made to produce surfacing material. A certain amount of small rock was produced in breaking large pieces of rock into usable sizes for Telford base and this was used for surfacing.

The detachment at Boucq also operated a gravel pit the material from which was used as a binder for the crushed rock places as a wearing surface on roads. All shipments were made by motor truck.

When the quarry at Boucq was closed down the detach-

ment with the tools, barracks and lumber for bins was moved by auto truck to a site near Bains les Bains.

The rock here was granite and trap and only crushed rock was produced. It was the only hard rock quarried in this sector. All shipments were made by canal boats to Vertusey and Toul, where the rock was transferred to trucks and narrow gauge cars and distributed. The work of unloading the canal barges was done by either the 23rd Road Engineers or the 21st Engineers (L. R.) who were always closely allied in the sector.

The quarry at Mandres was operated only a short time when the shelling became so bad that this detachment was moved back to Trondes and a quarry opened there. At this site all the machinery had been installed by the French, and it was rented from them. This quarry was operated from about April 1st to December 4th. All drilling was done by hand. Shipments were made by narrow gauge and by trucks.

Royaumeix quarry, located near Menil-la-Tour, was operated for some time by the 23rd Engineers, but was later taken over by the 28th Engineers and operated by labor battalions, with one officer from the 28th in charge. Two portable Western Wheel Scraper Co. crushers with elevators and screens were set up and an Ingersoll Rand portable compressor and piston drills used for drilling. Both blockage for Telford base and crushed rock were produced and shipped by narrow gauge and trucks. This quarry was operated by the 28th Engineers from May until June 17th, when work was suspended. It was reopened on August 26th and work finally suspended on September 16th.

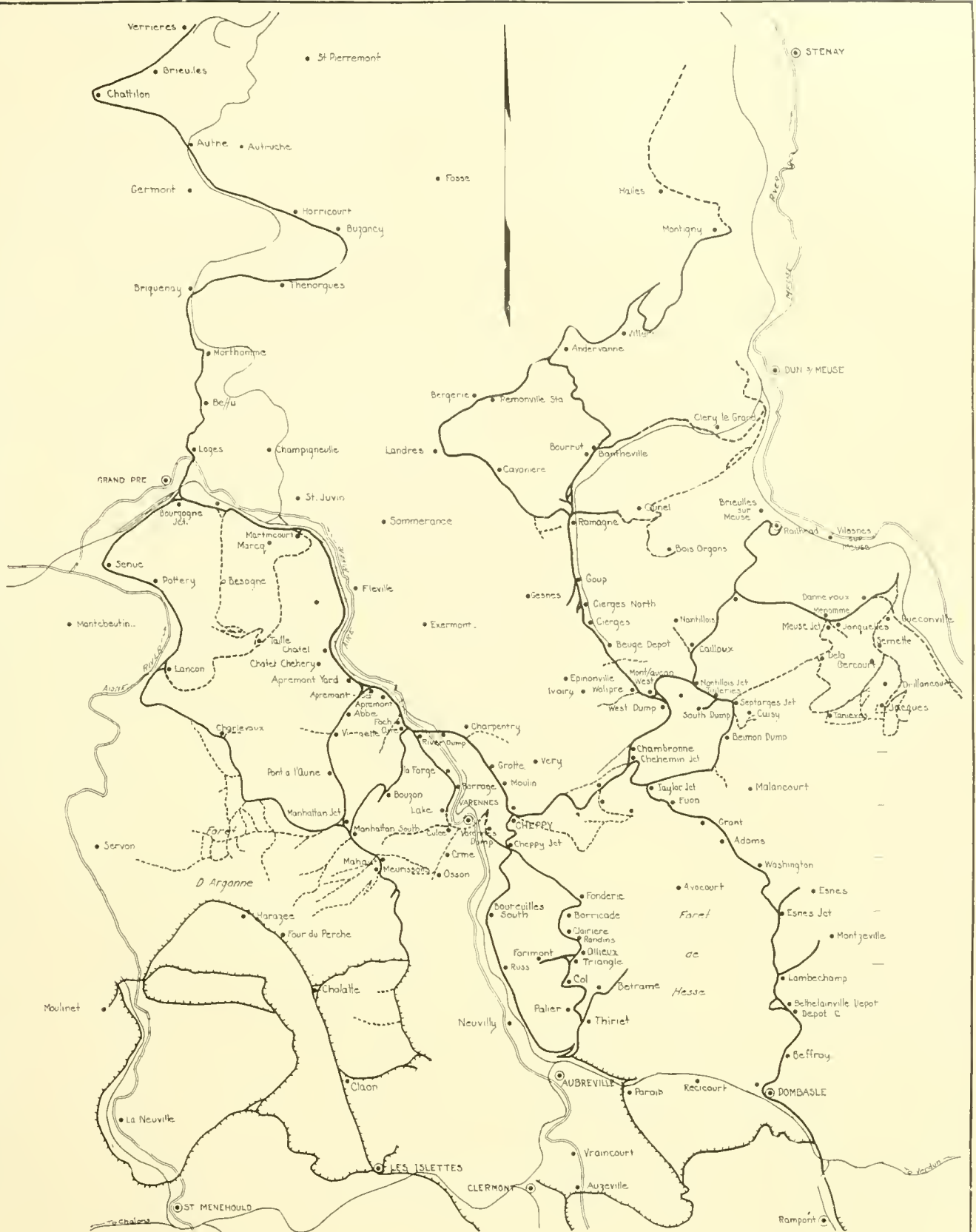
One of the lessons learned during the St. Mihiel offensive



*Rock Crusher and Storage Bins at Mouton*

was that with the small amount of machinery and the shortage of transportation existing during the drive, it was not possible to keep both light railways and roads supplied with ballast, and other arrangements had to be made to provide the necessary amount of ballast for the railways.





# 60<sup>cm</sup> RAILWAYS ARGONNE SECTOR

21<sup>ST</sup> REGIMENT ENGINEERS, LIGHT RAILWAY  
U.S. ARMY

Latest Revision  
Nov. 13, 1918.

Scale  
0 1 2 3 4 KM

## LEGEND

- 60<sup>cm</sup> Railways Operated by 21<sup>ST</sup> Engrs
- 60<sup>cm</sup> Railways Operated by French
- 60<sup>cm</sup> Railways not in Service
- Standard Gauge Railways
- ⊙ Railheads
- Sidings and Towns

# History of the Building Department

By Master Engineer Wilkinson

Often when looking back and thinking of the vague ideas we had about what the duties of a light railway regiment should be, how different everything was to what was expected. It seems a pity that so much experience should be lost to the army and that it will greatly remain for other men in future wars to gain their own experiences, for many of the men who helped in countless ways to make the army a success are only too anxious to get back to their own affairs where they can construct instead of destroy, make more money and do their work in their own way. It was evident that very little attention had been paid to anything like a regular building force that should erect warehouses, buildings, make furniture, repair cars and do everything that might even remotely approach building construction. Of course, the building of bridges and trestle work was expected, but that was only a portion of the work that the department was called upon to do.

The first work was at Chalet. It was decided to build two hundred four-man bunks. Lumber was obtained from the French. It came in all sizes and was about one and one-eighth inches thick, very poor and very wet. A detail of fourteen men was sent from Company E, which contained one carpenter. Working from a standard army plan, slightly improved upon in making them portable, yet rigidly adhered to in all other respects, and with the exceedingly wet and heavy lumber, was produced what has been commonly known in the regiment as the "Wilkinson bombproof bunk." That was the last of the regular army plans. After that the department made their own. In fabricating them factory style was adopted. Using an Adrian barrack as a work shop, benches were erected around the sides and each man was taught to make one piece of work. By means of this method twenty bunks were turned out daily.

The next move was to Sorey, where barracks were erected. The first thing needed was a regimental building. There was some one-inch lumber on hand, but it was all sizes. A conference was held and the suggestion made that if some wood-working machinery could be obtained the department could build almost anything. The following day a French machine for cutting cordwood was procured. This was taken to pieces and rebuilt with a table, then work on headquarters building was started. This structure was ninety feet long, twenty-four feet wide, and was built in a hollow for protection from bombs. Owing to the scarcity of wood, it was necessary to substitute corrugated paper for the inside partitions. A detail of eight men was sent from Company B and the work was completed in five days. It was a boxed frame building built western style, bungalow finish, papered on the outside with roofing paper, battled and painted and made one of the most attractive headquarters on the front.

The department then received orders to build a regimental warehouse and other buildings in the new Sorey

yards. The first building was 168 by 50 feet and was wanted in a hurry. There was to be about a five-foot fill on one side and about a one-foot six-inch fill on the other, and no lumber or material on hand. It was decided that a stone wall would be the best and cheapest way of holding the fill, and the building should be erected with a pole construction making up the rafters and plates from one-inch lumber, as this was the only type of lumber obtainable. Everything possible was cut on the machine, and the building, which had twelve double sliding doors, windows and office, was finished in seven days.

The material had not arrived for any of the buildings.



*Unloading Wounded from the Narrow Gauge*

but construction continued, the men using small amounts of material salvaged from one place and another.

Mobile Hospital No. 39, at Vertuzey, having moved into incomplete French hospital barracks, asked for help. Ten men were sent from Company B and a sterilizing room was built, also several additions and considerable hospital furniture, all of which had to be hand-dressed on account of sanitation. At the same time the department erected a 400-foot warehouse, a machine shop, engine shop, coal trestle and numerous other buildings.

Another machine was built and requests for assistance on building work came from all parts of the sector. Work in the Sorey yard was nearing completion, but, as in most regiments, there was a shortage of carpenters, chiefly on account of the high wages of the shipyards and cantonments. The only way to increase the output was to increase the machinery and efficiency. Forty men built the 400-foot warehouse and 500 feet of platform in five days. Two machines were placed at one end of the warehouse and a track was run down the center of the building. It was necessary to rip 5 x 8 lumber in half to get framing lumber and every piece was ripped and cut to fit on the saw. This was distributed on push cars and a detail from Company A nailed the frame together. So hard were the saws run that men became exhausted and had to be relieved. On account of the good time made in constructing the warehouse they were given a half holiday.

Owing to the vast amount of shop work coming in,



it was decided to try and build a planing machine. The plans were drawn, the machine shop assisted in the construction and the machine was a distinct success. The frame was of wood and had twelve-inch cutters. The shop then began turning out folding chairs, office furniture, partitions, broken parts for speeders and cars, sign posts,



*American Light Railway Bridge Over Canal at Sorcy*

knocked-down telegraphers' huts, bath houses, bunks, latrines. Five hundred flat cars were fitted up for hospital stretchers, boxcars were built, also hospital furniture, doors, windows, ramps for unloading military tanks and thousands of feet of lumber were ripped and planed for other regiments. The department's operations extended from Neufchateau to Belleville, and in order to look after all the work it was necessary for a man to ride between forty and fifty miles daily in a side car, taking sizes and figuring on work.

Every effort was made to make all work portable. The engineering office was constantly at work bringing out standard plans for articles required, while at the same time all the men working assisted in improving ideas and methods. Practically everything was standardized. The building end was handled directly by Lieut.-Col. H. J. Slifer and all

orders received his signature. As far as can be ascertained, the 21st Engineers were the only ones on the American front who had a portable planing mill.

As soon as the buildings in the yard were completed the lumber arrived to build them. However, there was plenty of use for it. As the time for the St. Mihiel drive approached the shop became overloaded with work. A bridge was built over the canal for the Pagny line and on the last day, 800 feet of hospital platform was erected in anticipation of the wounded. Ramps for military tanks and material for stockades were made up and the stockade and buildings at Ligny and Pagny were erected, also a 500 x 50-foot warehouse at Belleville.

The drive yielded salvaged machinery and the department received a 12-inch jointer, a 12-inch pony planer and boring machine. Shafting was built on a wooden girder which set on the ground and to this was attached two planing machines and one buzz saw, driven by two three horsepower Harvester gasoline motors. There also was a portable saw rig. This machinery was so arranged that it could be taken to pieces, loaded on cars and assembled in an hour. A portable shop was built and, thanks to the supply department and quick exit of the Germans, the shop was well equipped with tools.

When the regiment moved to the Argonne the shop was set up at Dombasle, where the work continued, supplying the railroad army with necessities that were lacking.

In Conflans over sixteen crates of glass were used in making the buildings habitable. Here the building department moved into an old French shop and had a most complete factory. As soon as the town had been repaired so that the houses were habitable, work was started at the French Caserne at Labry, repairing the barracks where the 21st mobilized after giving up the standard gauge railroad to the French.

## Headquarters Organization, Operating Department

By Private William Dean, Jr.

The headquarters office, operating department, was formed for the purpose of handling all matters pertaining to the operation of the light railways controlled by the 21st Engineers. The personnel of the office consisted of a general superintendent, assistant to the general superintendent, superintendent transportation, transportation inspector, a chief clerk and a clerical force.

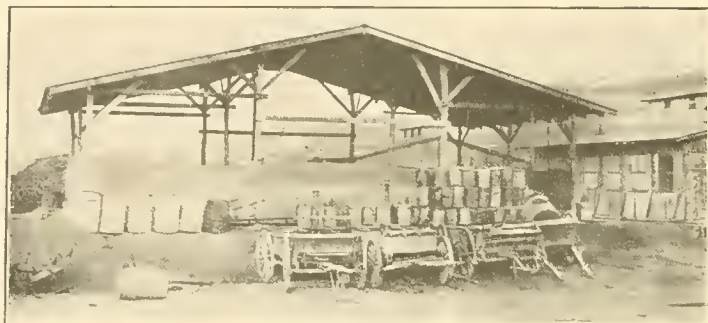
The general superintendent was in charge of all light railway operation and worked in conjunction with the various army divisions, corps headquarters and army headquarters. He also kept in touch with the ammunition dumps, ration dumps, engineering dumps and rock quarries. This was for the purpose of giving all parties the necessary car service required. All orders for cars were sent to his office and he forwarded instructions for the taking care of the persons interested, and in case where all the orders could not be handled at once, issued orders to handle the most important.

Also under his jurisdiction came the handling of troops

who were being either relieved or entering the trenches and returning the wounded. It is a well known fact that this regiment acquired quite a little distinction in handling the relief of divisions on two separate occasions. This was a rather important test for the Light Railway system, but on both occasions, practically the entire foot troops of the divisions concerned were transported to the trenches by the Light Railway system without an accident, saving them a long and tiresome hike of probably fifteen to twenty-five kilometers and brought them to the trenches in fresh condition. When the various divisions would send reliefs to the trenches the troops would be hauled there by the Light Railways, and the regiment being relieved would be transported back to their base.

The Superintendent of Transportation handled all car orders and transmitted them to the Division Superintendents whom they affected. It was his business to keep in touch with all ammunition, ration and engineering dumps, as well as the railheads and rock quarries in regard to the

number of cars they required for the day's business. He also received a daily report covering the situation on the entire system pertaining to the number of trains run, loads moved to and from the front, empties moved, total number of cars loaded, total number of loads awaiting movement and loads received from other lines than our own. From this report he could obtain an approximate idea of the



*Sorcy Oilhouse*

business done each day, and what to base future work upon. He would also receive a report of the motive power relative to the number of engines ready for service, and what were not serviceable. He also handled the distribution of rolling stock and kept it equalized among the various railway divisions as far as conditions would permit.

The assistant general superintendent was in charge of all the administration work and kept a record of the entire personnel of the Second Battalion in regard to positions held in civil life, years of experience on their particular line of work and what they were best qualified for. He would see that the men carried out their work efficiently and that all orders were properly carried out. To him also fell the position of liaison officer. This duty brought

him in close touch with the French so that the very best possible service was obtained for all concerned.

The transportation inspector visited personally all important loading points, such as railheads and various dumps, to see that the proper car service was given and to see that the working conditions at the various stations were such that everything possible was being done to expedite the loading and movement of all cars.

The chief clerk was in charge of all the clerical force in one office and supervised all work which was done by them. To him the clerical force would turn in all reports pertaining to light railway operation. These reports required the amount of mileage operated by the light railways, number of trains run, engine miles (revenue, work, wrecking, light and helper), total net ton miles, the average net tons handled, the classification of tonnage, a record (loaded and empty), car miles per train mile, the total net tons hauled one mile, the number of cars handled, of fuel (such as coal and gasoline) consumed, the amount of engine, valve, lubricating and transmission oil used and the amount of waste and car oil used. There was also a report covering the assignment of the personnel in regards to the work they were doing, and a report on engines and tractors in service, and number of cars on the system. These reports the chief clerk would verify and pass to the general superintendent for approval, who in turn would forward them to the director of light railways.

The telephone system of the 21st Engineers was also under the supervision of the operating department, and the system was well designed, and any town or station on the light railway system could be reached without delay. It was the rule of the phone system to code as much as possible, and that was the cause of a good code system being installed in the department, so that if the enemy did make connection with our lines, he was at a loss to know what the various parties were speaking about.

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## Train Dispatching on the Light Railways—21st Engineers

By Sergeant Warner

The work of the First and Second Battalion of the 21st Engineers (L. R.) from an operating and train dispatching viewpoint, began when the 60 cm. French lines from Menil-la-Tour north to Bernecourt and west to Broussey, with the branch from Neuf Etang to Naugin-sard. Previous to this, the train and enginemen, as well as operators and train dispatchers, had been riding the French trains on the "soixante" lines out of Menil-la-Tour getting familiar with the territory. The French turned over to us a number of their steam and gasoline locomotives, as the U. S. A. equipment of this kind had not yet arrived from the base port. These lines of light railway had been operated by the French as a part of their artillery work and the French railroaders were outfitted as French artillery. They served their batteries with ammunition and supplies and moved heavy guns about as needed. This

work now fell to the 21st Engineers and rapidly increased in volume as the American troops became more numerous on this front, which was usually referred to as "the sector northwest of Toul." In addition to ammunition, all kinds of supplies were handled, such as barbed wire, stakes, camouflage, roadway materials and cinder ballast to get the light railway into better condition for the heavy work ahead. The entire line being operated as single track, it was necessary to place an operator day and night at each siding, all of which were connected with central dispatching office by telephone. The dispatcher's office was at first located at Leonval, where a day and night chief dispatcher, with three trick dispatchers, were on duty during the entire twenty-four hours directing the movement of trains and distribution of cars. Cars were very limited in number and had, therefore, to do double duty, often making two or



more trips a day. About June 1st the new line from Cornicville to Sorey was completed and placed in operation and the increasing business made it necessary to divide the territory into two dispatching districts, each taken care of by three trick dispatchers, working eight-hour tricks, one day chief and one night chief directing both sets. The office was moved to Neuf Etang to obtain a more central location. By this time the 23rd Engineers had their work of highway construction and repair well under way and required large quantities of crushed rock which was obtained from quarries at Menil-la-Tour, Trondes and Sorey, also from standard railheads at La Reine and from barges at Vertuzey. Seven to nine cars of rock were all that one engine could handle over the heavy grades and with over a hundred earloads of rock being handled daily, in addition to about the same amount of rations from Sorey railhead to Menil-la-Tour and the usual run of material and ammunition, commonly known as fertilizer, the dispatchers and operators were kept busy. By August American troops were rapidly being mobilized in this sector and their movements and change-out of divisions threw an added burden on the light railway. All troop movements had to be handled under cover of darkness and with utmost secrecy, as much of the line was within range of Boche guns on Mont Sec and their planes were quite active in night raids. As many as six hundred cars of troops were handled in four days during one change-out. All of these cars had to be obtained from the supply in daily use handling rations and other materials, which meant close figuring on the part of the dispatching forces, as the troop movements were scheduled to the minute by general headquarters and engines and cars had to be at the appointed place at the right time. American engines and cars were now fairly numerous, the French engines having been returned to the French in May.

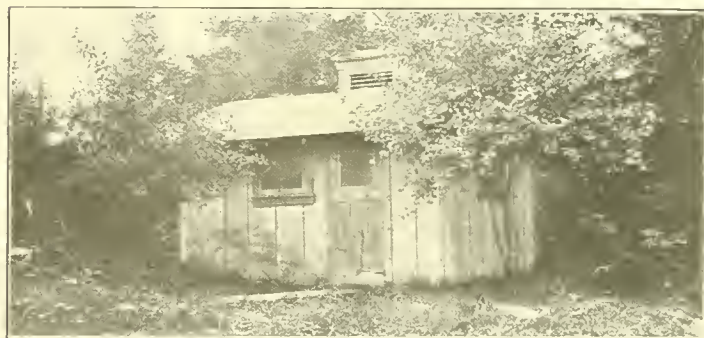
About August 1st the territory from Menil-la-Tour east to the River Moselle and south to Toul and Dongermain was added to the light railway operated by the 21st Engineers. New dispatchers' offices were opened at Menil-la-Tour and at Belleville and preparations began in earnest for the St. Mihiel drive. New divisions of American troops were placed in line and in reserve. More engines



*Narrow Gauge Locomotive and Train*

and cars were placed in operation and before September nearly all traffic on the light railways was subordinated to the movement of ammunition and batteries of artillery. A number of new ammunition dumps were opened and the business from the older ones greatly increased. Train and engine men worked day and night for long hours to get this material to destination, and every steam and gas locomotive was pressed into service and about twenty more

borrowed from the French, making a total of about 100 locomotives which were kept going night and day. These were busy times for the train dispatchers as well as every one else. Train sheets had to be patched daily to make room for the large number of train movements and chiefs were looking for more cars to fill the heavy orders coming



*Sorey Officers' Bath House*

in hourly. Trainmasters and superintendents worked day and night keeping watch over all and clearing up numerous derailments. A continuous stream of motor traffic passed over the newly constructed highways, which then proved their worth. Tanks and heavy tractors added to our difficulties by tearing up our tracks, but this was all a part of the day's work.

History tells how the great drive was successfully carried out and soon our doughboys were far in advance of the old line on which such extensive preparatory work had been done. The light railway then did its part in rushing up quantities of road plank with which the road engineers bridged the gaps in the highways and kept the stream of trucks moving across "no man's land," rushing all kinds of supplies up to the new lines. As soon as possible, the 60 cm. lines were connected through with the German lines of similar gauge. Construction across the several kilometers of tangled wire and shell holes presented many difficulties, but in a surprisingly short time we were operating through both, via Pont de Metz and via Flirey and Essey, and the Bois Chanot line to Xivray and beyond. Long hauls were now the rule and lack of telephone communications made difficult the work of train dispatching. The new lines were the scene of many derailments, but in spite of all obstacles, much material and supplies went through to its destination in good time. In the early part of October we were relieved by the 12th Engineers, who had reinforced us before the St. Mihiel offensive.

The trip from the Toul sector to the Argonne, where we were to assist on First Army operations, was made in the early part of October, part of movement being made by motor trucks and the balance moving over light railway lines. A part of the light railway movement took us quite close to the Boche lines and those present were treated to considerable shelling while en route, making the trip a memorable one.

On arrival at the Argonne sector, the First and Second Battalions were divided and stationed at various points through that region. Fighting was actively in progress and as soon as possible track connections were made with the Boche lines of 60 cm. and U. S. A. engines placed in service hauling rations and ammunition. At first most of the supplies came from standard gauge railheads at Dombasle, Auberville and Les Islettes and later from

Varennés and Grand Pré. Twenty-first Engineers were located at Dombasle, Aisne, Chelmin Junction, Mont Faucon, Auberville, Barriade, Cheppy, River Depot and Senue, as well as many other points through the sector. Train dispatching was attended with the usual difficulties



*La Reine Siding and Operator's Shack*

owing to lack of telephone lines, and the territory released by the rapid retreat of the Hun was so extensive that it was not until nearly the close of the offensive that we had much communication. Much supplies were handled,

trains running on "smoke" and got along very well. In this sector the 21st (First and Second Battalions) had the most experience with enemy bombing planes and whiz bangs, a direct hit on one of our locomotives at Mareq resulting in the death of Engineer Ritchie and serious injury of the fireman. Several others were hurt by shrapnel and machine gun fire. At the time the armistice was signed we were hauling into Buzancy on the west line and Romange and Montigny on the east side and preparing to open lines farther up. Shortly after the armistice the First and Second Battalions of the 21st were transferred to standard gauge work on lines out of Conflans, Audun, Longuyon and Longwy, dispatchers at Conflans directing the work, assisted by those at Audun. Most of these lines are double tracked. Supplies for the Army of Occupation amounting to six to eight trains daily moved from Conflans to Audun, and French supplies of nearly an equal volume from Conflans to Longuyon. Many refugee and troop trains were handled as well as regular passenger service. Yards at Conflans and Audun and Longuyon handled by our men, all quite busy and matters complicated by having to work in conjunction with French and German speaking trainmen and enginemen. The Third and Fourth Battalions of the 21st relieved us about the middle of February. They had been assisting in the work for several weeks prior to this.

## A Dispatcher's Trick—Working a Trick on the Slim Gauge

By Sergeant C. E. Habiger, A. T. D. A. 3743, Second Battalion Headquarters

First, I will endeavor to give you some idea of our office. The office was not located in a modern steam heated building, nor were there any plate glass windows to look through, no walnut table for the train sheet to lie on, no electric lights or selector telephone. Instead, our office was located in a swiss hut, about 30 by 20, built of soft white pine and very unique in appearance, but it made little appearance, as it was up in the thickest of timber and underbrush, of white pine boards camouflaged to look like a pile of autumn leaves, and was very seldom noticed by the passing doughboy going to or from the trenches. The windows were of white cloth, which was transparent to light, but when I wanted to look out I had to open the door. Our lighting system was the best known in France—the faithful candle. However, after a short period we "managed" for some gasoline lamps and the night men were setting on the top of the world. Our telephone line was a metallic circuit, all stations on the division being connected to this one line. We used the code ringing system for ringing the different stations wanted.

I worked first trick on the old Soixante (60 em.) and like all first trick men, got down to the office about 7.45 A. M. with the usual grouch, but instead of asking the third trick man if all the regular trains had gone, I would ask if any of the track was blown up last night. I would then take the transfer. Instead of checking up how much time each crew had to make it in on the sixteen hours, I would first see what was left to move, and then how many cars had been furnished for today's loading and number

of cars in sight, for one can rest assured that every car that is furnished is going to be loaded, and loaded toot sweet, and probably two or three times during the day if the hauls are short. I would then see how many crews were available for call at different times during the day and begin to figure on how soon I could afford to let the



*Operator's Shelter Nauginsard Junction*

older crews now on the road come in and tie up for rest, as some of them had been out eighteen or twenty hours.

As we only hauled ten to twelve loads in a train, it did not take long to load up several trains at a large engineer dump, ammunition dump or rock quarry, and it was up to the trick man to keep in constant touch with the operators at these points and watch the progress of the



loading and figure on having power at that point, just as soon as a train was loaded; but not before. To get them there before would lose valuable time which could be used to great advantage elsewhere, or to give the crew a little more rest before calling them out. Everything running smoothly and it is an interesting job, eight hours passing before one can realize it. But one has a feeling that something is going to happen—things can't run that smooth very long. That 5048 hasn't been doing very well the past few days and she is on a rush train of ammunition this morning; she passes the first station at the time expected. I then let the only engine available in that vicinity start out with a train of barbed wire for the front. The barbed wire train passes a couple of stations. In the meantime the ammunition train is not showing up. I call the operator every few minutes asking him if extra east is in sight yet, or any sign of him, and every time he tells me there's not a sound. It's the same old game, take the engine off the barbed wire train and send it back and put on the ammunition train, just the same as you would cut an engine off at the fruit train and put on the De Luxe when the De Luxe has an engine failure.

Next, I get hold of the yardmaster, tell him to call a crew to go light S. A. P. (soon as possible) to Station 3 and pick up a train of barbed wire there. He starts out after the call boy. I call him back, telling him to make it two crews. There's another train of cement ready for the front. Give the second train anything you may have to move for the front. He tells me he has five cars of lumber ready to go now, and that the dump has an extra force working today and the other five cars will be ready by the time he gets a crew called, making a full train. I tell him to call three crews, and if that train of rations shows up on the standard gauge, call the fourth, fifth and sixth crews as soon as they have had their rest. He pulls his hat down over his eyes and starts out looking for the call boy again, cussing the dispatchers on his way.

About that time Fritz throws over a few shells and hits the track right in front of the ammunition train. No section men being available in that vicinity, the crew begin to make temporary repairs so they can get over it, while

I hear the shell explode, it being not far from the office. The linemen are all at the other end of the road constructing a line along a new piece of track. It is a most serious offense in the army for one to be caught tampering with wires or climbing a telephone pole without the neces-



*Boucq Est*

sary blue band around his arm, which designates him a lineman, and in his pocket he also carries a certified statement that he is doing that class of work in a designated area. One thing sure, I cannot do any good here without a wire, so I cut off a piece of blue blotter, about the size of a band and put it around my arm, get a piece of barbed wire and proceed to the point of the break. I am noticed by the different guards stationed at different points through the woods, but was not challenged. However, I knew I was taking no chances, as later proofs of my mission there would explain, but should I have been challenged and did not possess the necessary certified statement. I would probably be detained from completing my day's work that day until I was investigated further. Getting back to the office, the chief is on the phone, working just as fast as he can work, getting things lined up again that have fallen back since the wire broke. He is too busy to stop and tell me what he has done, so I might set in and take it from there, so I just plug in and get back into the game gradually, and when he has time, he tells me what has been done since the wire "came up" and I start to work again. The operator at Station No. 6 now comes in and tells me the ammunition train engine is backing in light. I tell him to go out and find out what is wrong. The section foreman sends back the information that he needs a twenty-radius curve section of track to make the last repair and none available in that vicinity. I have a train of cement now leaving the engineer dump and there are plenty of twenty-radius curve rail there—I get hold of the operator and ask him if extra east is about ready to go, and he tells me they are going now and starts to give me an "OS", and I break in and ask him if he can stop them—if so, do so quickly. He does not answer, but I can hear the phone receiver hit his table—he has gone out. He comes back and tells me they are stopping, and is anxious to know what is going on. I give him a message addressed to the conductor, to put a section of twenty-radius curve rail on the head car of his train and proceed to Station No. 6 with only that one car, as I want him to make the best time possible, leaving the remaining nine cars on the siding. The engine on the ammunition train has been out on the road for ten hours and is probably getting low on coal and water anyway, so I'll just stop them at Station No. 4, where they can get



*Ration Train.*

they send a man back to the telephone office to inform the dispatcher. I then get hold of the nearest gang and they start out to repair the blown-up track, the foreman assuring me that he has all the material necessary close at hand to make the repairs with. Fritz throws over a few more, this time the concussions breaking my telephone line. I can hear the phone go "dead" at the same time

a good meal, coal up and get water and I'll send them back after the remaining nine cars of cement and let the fresh crew and engine with the one car of cement pick up the ammunition train after the track is repaired. They have a good engine and should be able to handle an extra car of cement. Other trains are moving good. All the rations that came in on the standard gauge, I diverted via



*A U. S. Narrow Gauge Locomotive*

the loop or cut-off line that had just been completed a few days before and they are at the front now being unloaded. The track is repaired and the ammunition moves forward and is put into position by the small gas tractors and unloaded. The barbed wire, cement, rock and lumber trains are nearing their destination, but there is no room on the unloading tracks, as they are full of empties that have been unloaded that morning, and no way to get them out, on account of the track being shot out. I use the engine off the ammunition train, and take the engine that came up on the loop on ration trains and have them clean out all empties, in the meantime having some of the wire, cement or rock trains set out their train on a siding and return for another train, while the unloading tracks are being cleared and empties moved out.

Things moving nicely again, but an operator way up on the other end of the road comes in with the news that they need the wrecking crew up there, and takes the joy out of life again. I get the details of the wreck and get the caller started out after a crew. A company of stevedores were loading a train of twenty flat cars with logs for the saw mill, the loading point being at a blind siding and on a steep grade. The cars had been tied down properly when placed for loading last night by our crew, and also the wheels blocked, but after the black boys had partly loaded the train they decided they could be loaded more easily by dropping the cars down the track a few yards, where the logs were more handy. As soon as the brakes were let off and the blocking removed, all the cars started down the hill. After getting a good start, putting on the brakes would not hold them, and all the black boys piled off, digging up cinders and mashing down underbrush along the right-of-way. These cars continued, increasing their speed as they went down the hill. Although there were some very sharp curves for them to go round, none of them left the rails until they came to the end of the track at the switch-back, which we call the "question mark." The first four cars that hit the small embankment, used as a bumper, they pitched into the air and straight ahead for about two hundred feet, making it necessary to lay a temporary piece of track out to them in order to

get them back on the railroad again. The other eight cars were also broken and derailed, but did not leave the right-of-way. All of them had to go to the rip track for repairs before they could be reloaded again.

This mess has to be cleaned up tonight for tomorrow morning there is going to be a train of large guns coming in on the standard gauge that will have to be moved into these woods, as they are to go into action tomorrow night. The operator at Station No. 1 comes in on the phone and gives me the report that the wrecker is leaving town. I was pleased, as well as somewhat surprised, for this is the first time that that operator ever gave me an "OS" on a train without having to call for it. However, after he got through, he reminded me that tomorrow was his day off, and wished to know if the relief man would be around all right to work for him the next day.

It is getting close to 4 o'clock and about time to be making up my transfer. All the material of different kinds that has been loaded so far during the day is now on its way up to the front and all empties on their way back. Tonight, after dark, we start to move the 82nd Division out of the trenches and the 89th Division in. They require ninety cars for the 82nd Division. There are more than enough to protect the 82nd Division troop more loaded cars on their way that we can figure on, which is more than enough to protect the 82nd Division's troop movement for today. We have enough empties going back to protect the first day's quota of the 89 Division troop movement from Station No. 52 to the front. Everything looks good for a clean transfer to my relief, with exception of the wreck.

The second trick man comes in. He has a cheerful look on his face as though he and the world were getting along together just about right. He carries this cheerfulness until he sets down and starts to take my transfer. He sees the wrecker out, the main line tied up, new slow orders on the track that has been blown up, the heavy troop movement that is going to take place just as soon as it begins to get dark, all those cars to assemble at the front for the movement, and his cheerfulness begins to change into a frown. I watch him make his "cheeks" until he



*Narrow Gauge Tank Cars*

has checked the last line on the transfer and has signed his initials in that usual round graceful manner. I ask him: "Have you got everything under your mit?" and he gives me a snappy "Yes, get out of here," without looking up. I have put in a fairly good day. I take my watch off the nail and am on my way to my dugout.



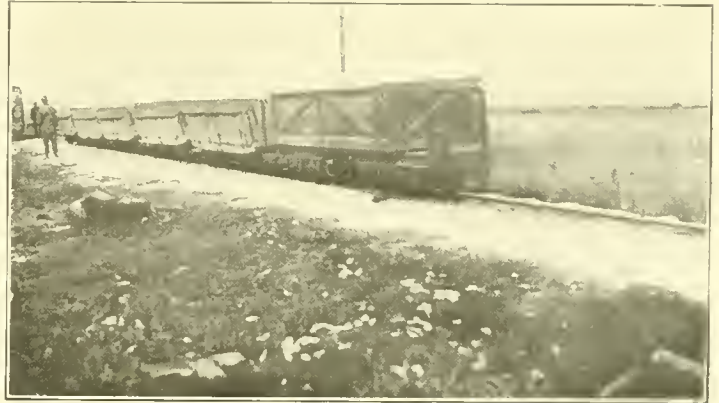
# Running an Engine on the "Soixante"

By Travelling Engineer Van T. Sherman

Running an engine on the "soixante" in war times is like a Jew, with a yellow necktie, going to a nigger picnic on St. Patrick's Day—always something of interest going on. For instance, a man goes to bed in his billet with one ear cocked open. He dozes off, but is soon awakened by the throbbing drone of a "nom de present" Boche airplane. He tries to sleep, but the anti-aircraft guns soon have him hunting for his "tin hood" and by the time Fritz drops his tail gate, unloading a ton or two of bombs, he is safely in a dug-out or a trench. By the time this has happened three times in one night he doesn't feel like going out on a job good for anything from sixteen to sixty hours and under nerve racking conditions most of the time.

It was before the St. Mihiel offensive. The "Slim Gauge" line from the railhead at Sorey Gare climbed steadily its twisting way to Cornieville, eight kilometers away, and it was a battle for steam all the way, as from twelve to fourteen cars of rations and forage was quite a load for such a small engine. It was necessary for the engineer to stand up, manage the sand lever with one hand and unbalance the throttle with the other and the "Johnson bar" the best way that he could. The grade was the natural roll of the ground, so great care had to be taken to slacken speed with the steam jam brake to keep from turning over on the right angle curves. After battling thus with a fourteen load train, the engineer's nerves and temper was on edge upon reaching Cornieville, so that he was in good shape to take the hill ahead, which was so straight up that it leaned back. The railroad also

would go after it. Momentum would be gained in the "sag," then take the hill, putting a barrage out of the stack that would shame a B. & O. hog in West Virginia. The leading engineer would offer up a prayer, toot his



*Captured German Equipment. Looking Toward Vignuelles From Woinville*

whistle and offer up thanks again if he got up the hill without getting off the track, killing some innocent bystanders or running into a loaded caisson.

In respect to our small Baldwins, great care had to be taken to keep them on the track and to keep the engine from turning over. The engines were built with a straddle tank, with a connecting pipe underneath the boiler to equalize the water. The engines were a little high for a 24 in gauge and, therefore, a little top-heavy. In leaning, the water in the tank would rush over to the low side through the equalizing pipe, and it was quite a job for the engineer to decide whether to jump off or speed up to cross the bad place in the track.

The roadbed was always very uncertain, often because the track was laid over recently filled shell holes and would give way after a rain. Many of our engines turned over on this account. Often at night heavy artillery, pulled by tractors, would cross over the track or run on it. The extremely heavy weight would bend the ties, throwing the track out of gauge and it would be very hard to detect it even in day time.

Preparatory to the St. Mihiel drive, the wagon roads in the day time were practically deserted, as Fritz had his balloons up, but at night the roads were jammed, two continuous strings of trucks and artillery, one each way, and the railroad ran along the side of the road. Many times on dark nights the engines would run into the trucks, because absolutely no lights were burning. The artillery and the trucks did not know where they were, or whether or not they were near a railroad. A number of times a caisson would be very close to the track. The engine would clear, but the saddle tank would climb right



*Ash Pit, Sorey*

was on the edge of the wagon road, constantly jammed with military traffic and jam up against the houses on the other side—with old women chasing out into the track in their wooden shoes and babies playing "ring around the roses" right in the way. A pusher engine would tie on behind, and, after three or four slips, the little Baldwin

up on the wheel of the caisson and tip over with no warning to the crew at all.

An unsafe speed had to be made at many, many points, because the country was rolling and the track laid to conform with it.

In many places we had to contend with  $3\frac{1}{2}\%$  grades.



*French Narrow Gauge Locomotive Damaged by Shell Fire*

mingled with sharp curves and obstructed vision. The rating for one engine was seven loads of rock or fifteen empties. To handle these trains up these grades, the greatest speed possible, twenty-five or twenty-six miles per hour, had to be acquired first. To do this and hit the bottom of the hill with enough water and 180 pounds of steam, absolute skill had to be used. Both the sanders had to be working, the train to be started at the logical point to take advantage of the sag, the engine with just enough water in the boiler to work wide the throttle without water slopping over into dry pipes and not to work over on the hill with the engine raised in front, at the same time having water on the crown sheet in tipping over the top of the hill, not to drop a soft plug. The steaming properties of the engine would not allow the working of injectors on these hills, the water lost to be regained in drifting down the other side.

The engine in making one of these hills had to be started off full stroke and cut back to short cut-off after she commenced picking up speed. This had to be skilfully executed to hit the hill with the maximum speed, with the engine hot, and the proper amount of water. The engineer simply had to trust in Providence not to tip over, hit a cannon, a column of squads, some wooden-shoed women, or a French general. When the engine commenced to lag, she must be changed to longer cut-off judiciously so as not to run out of notches in the quadrant and to use the entire lot in making the hill. Many times the crews and some relief outfit, on their way to the trenches, would give a push on the train, saving the day. One slip of the engine drivers meant failure, and you either had to double the hill or take another run for it.

When the engine slipped working at full stroke and wide throttle she simply raised off the rails and bucked like a bronco, throwing sky rockets like star shells and often drawing fire from the enemy. Going down the hills was just as difficult, for the cars were so as to make it impossible for the crew to climb over and set all the brakes. So the conductor and two brakemen, the engineer with a steam jamb driver's brake and the whistle signals did the best they could. It was very difficult to hold the trains

with wet rails, and a very disagreeable sensation it was to come down a steep hill in a blinding rain out of control, knowing that the roads were jammed with traffic and trucks loaded with artillery ammunition.

After making the hill it was just as steep down one side as it was up the other and it was all that the three trainmen and the engine brake could do to hold the train; in addition to all this we were in plain sight of Montsec and within range of Fritz's guns, but somehow or other we were never shot at until we got into the woods. Half way down this hill the track would make two sharp turns, suddenly crossing the main highway and then parallel with it. At this point the railroad and highway were partially protected by camouflage and it was always by the greatest luck that the engine did not hit a cannon, truck or a column of squads on this crossing, especially at night. Within about two kilometers of this crossing the railroad entered the woods that extended to the trenches in the neighborhood of Raulecourt and Mandres, where the 26th Division was "broken in" and the first American battle of the war was fought. Through this woods after supper time (and usually without supper) darkness reigned. The artillery was everywhere; a battery of 75's would open up in the darkness alongside of the track at unexpected moments, scaring the engineer out of two years' growth. He would pinch his brake a little and listen for the shell to break on Montsec; then he would hear three or four "come in"; pinch his brake again and feel for his gas mask—too dark to find it and no lights allowed. Eventually, after feeling his way up and down, doing "column right and column left" and bumping his head against the trees he would wind up at the limit for steam engines and turn his train. Tractors would then take the loads three ways to the trenches.

After the safe (?) delivery of his train, which in most instances consisted of rations, ammunition and fresh reliefs for the trenches, our "hoghead" would pick up a train of empties for the return trip and duplicate his perilous way back as far as the edge of the woods in comparative safety and start back to the trenches again with more loads, continuing thus until his stomach thought his throat was cut, and his feet had no place to sit down. After an unbelievable number of hours of this sort of work every muscle



*Loading Troops on the Narrow Gauge*

would be sore from his constant tussle with the fiendish throttle and sand lever. Often, after completing fifteen hours or more of such work he would expect to go home, but instead, would be at the "tender" mercies of an alleged Chief Dispatcher, who would send him over other lines of the division delivering empties to the ammunition dumps



and loads to the front, until the man or machine was worn out. On the rare occasions that he was given ten hours (more or less) rest he was called upon again to repeat the same performance.

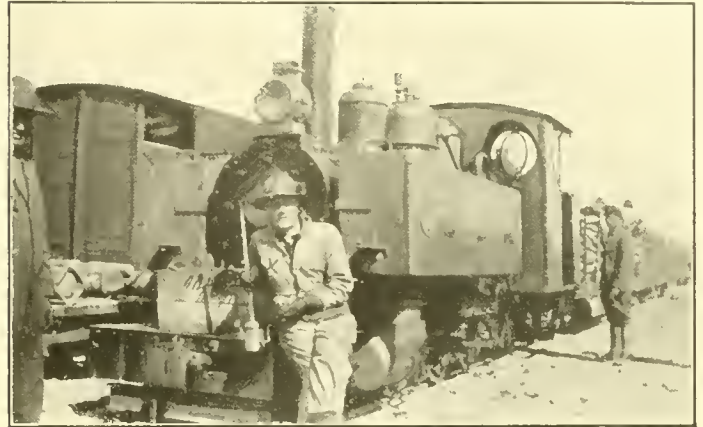
In addition to the above our enginemen were frequently called upon to take trains over strange track, on the darkest of nights and in country utterly unknown to them and in many instances perilously close to contested ground for delivery at points of which very little was known and in all cases this was successfully accomplished.

There was no lack of effort before and during the St. Mihiel offensive on the part of the men to make it the grand success that it was. We could have done much better, however, with quicker results and less effort and friction if we had but had the proper heads in the right place—jealousy between individuals and units and military “Red Tape” at critical times greatly reduced efficiency. The men, however, put forth a greater effort to counterbalance it.

The most important factor in light railway operation is steam. This was very hard to get and maintain on account of the nature of the grates and coal. The grates were very fine and with no apparatus to shake them. The coal was slack and of very poor quality. If men of extensive experience had been given places of authority they could have filled places as Travelling Engineers and Trainmasters early in the game and had the crews educated and the engines in shape before the arrival of the crisis: instead of this the places of authority were given to others and men were directing train movements whose civil life experience was that of civil engineers and railroad conductors. These men would unquestionably have been of much greater value in their own respective lines of work. There were very few men of authority who were practical enginemen and there was very little system to train operations. So the men were mostly placed upon their own resources and the success of this unit particularly at this time was due to the fact that the rank and file were exceptionally good men and that they were facing the Hun.

During the Argonne-Meuse offensive things were much different, the nature of the country was different, the track in rotten shape, poor facilities for eating and sleeping and more desperate fighting. But “Red Tape” was hopelessly cut. We covered so much territory that the men who knew

engines were placed where their work meant something. Therefore the work of the light railway was carried out more successfully, under much more trying physical conditions, so far away from the back shops that each operating company had to make their own running repairs and ingenuity instead of “Red Tape” kept the trains moving.



*About to Pull from Sorey Yard*

Night bombing and shelling was continuous and the men slept in all sorts of holes and dug-outs. The engineers took water and coal when and where they could get it. Business was extremely good in every sense. After a few engines had siphoned water from a shell hole near “K-1” in the shadow of Montfaucon a boot with a foot in it came to view. Farther up the line “Steam-Jam” Smith had found three dead “Crock-heads” lying peacefully in the bottom.

Over the line from Dombasle to Montfaucon, ninety loads of rations and shells, besides six or eight loads of poison gas, delivered to the front was an average day. This meant an equal number of empties coming back and no more than eight cars on any train. There was but six hours between October 14th and November 11th, that there was nothing placed at the ration dumps for unloading. This was on account of derailments. During this offensive crews worked in territory where forty sections of Decauville track were shot out by shell fire in one kilometer.

Very interesting railroading.

## A Soliloquy of a Soixante Engineer

It is finished now, and we are glad. The experience will bring a smile of satisfaction in the days to come, as we toast our shins at the fireside and review our part in the orgy to remove the pestilence from the earth.

The coal was invariably bad, mostly slack and dirt. It was always necessary to take advantage of every opportunity to replenish the steam pressure and water supply in the boiler. Hardly any of the engines would steam sufficiently well to work an injector while working steam. Because of the necessity for every engine on road work boiler washing was often deemed unessential and great care had to be exercised in carrying water to prevent foaming.

Due to the amount of work that fell to us it was necessary to handle in each train full capacity of the engine.

When the engines were designed no care had been taken of the balancing feature in the throttles. When the working pressure of 180 lbs. had been developed on the little boilers the throttles on most of the engines could not be opened with one hand.

If given a full opening the boiler pressure in the little 9"x16" cylinders would cause a violent slipping, tearing the fire to pieces and due to the shallow fire boxes, fill the bottom rows of the flues, depriving the engine of that much heating surface.

The sanders were worked by hand and you must let loose with one hand in order to work the sander. The throttle invariably would change slightly in doing this. We would

frequently hold onto the throttle until our arms, shoulders and wrists would become sore from the constant strain.

The speed restriction held us down to eight miles per hour. It was necessary to be reasonably sure of staying on the track. The ruling grade of the track was the physical characteristics of the undulating territory through which we were working.

It was impossible to pull the trains we were compelled to handle up the short heavy grades. Momentum must be gained in the descent of one grade to carry us over another. At the same time, time must be allowed to recuperate steam pressure and water supply sufficient to make the ascent. In gaining momentum for ascending a hill, each curve and low spot must not be forgotten. Otherwise derailment would result.

Ofttimes at night when the rails were bad, it was impossible to hold a train with the engine brake in descending a grade. A call for brakes would possibly result in the train crew believing something derailed and set too many brakes. When the signal was given to release brakes to get a start for the next hill it would require so much time in releasing them and the steam pressure so greatly reduced, we would stall on the hill.

A flag man must be sent back, the steam and water built up again and another attempt made.

Due to there being no lights used on the railroad nor highways, it was difficult to prevent running into vehicles, and the trains you were following.

It was particularly essential that the engineer be thoroughly familiar with the condition and the physical characteristics of the track over which he must go. Otherwise it would be impossible to properly gauge the speed necessary for making the next hill. Where to take advantage of a slight depression to accumulate steam, where the curves were sharp or the track in bad condition.

It was a man's size task to cope successfully with the many difficulties of transportation. To expedite the movement to the front one's head must be used for more than a hat rack.

There was no place to sit down and little protection from the elements was afforded by the parody of a cab that decorated the little engines.

I recall an operator from the 12th Engineers who made a trip from Trondes on a train of rock. "Are all engineers

always as busy as that one was?" he asked. I replied that I hadn't seen that engine in action but that every one of them was very busy when trying to make a heavy grade with a train.

One hand on the throttle, the other continually working the sand lever. Quickly reaching at times for the reverse lever to change the stroke of the valves; at the same time watching the track, the train and ever listening for the whistle carried by the trainmen signalling. At any moment a car was apt to jump the track.

After the reduction of the St. Mihiel salient, we were confronted by new conditions that were the exception rather than the rule before. The German road bed was of slag from the iron mines. In the marshes places were corduroyed with small poles in addition. The rails varied, most of it a little heavier perhaps than our American steel, and had been repaired by the addition of a section of the lighter steel where needed. The tracks went everywhere and it resembled a net very much, there was scarcely a point we could not reach by two or more routes.

There was only the water supply to draw from as it had been developed by the Germans.

It was necessary to use a suction hose to fill the water tanks from holes along the track. The ailments these very necessary appurtenances would contract made it essential to carry a water bucket. Many times have we filled the water tanks in that manner.

For days at a time we have had no telephone communication from station to station. The wires would be shot down, the line cut and in some instances our line would be appropriated by the Signal Corps as salvage.

The art of smoking from one block station to the next was carried to a high degree by day. At night, the pitch dark, stormy variety that met us in the Argonne are the ones that were particularly difficult for us. We, as a regiment, were smiled upon by the Divinity who regulates the destinies of the faithful. And in some miraculous manner we kept the endless line of supplies going to the front.

It isn't at all disagreeable in reviewing the situation to know that our part was a difficult one. It is consoling to indulge in a smile of satisfaction in the knowledge of a work well done.

*Private Bartlett A. Schilling, Company D.*

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## Sorey Railhead Operation

By C. S. Elliot

Of the several railheads operated in conjunction with the light railways of the 21st Engineers, Sorey was the most important. Turned over to the Operating Department about the first of August, 1918, Sorey became the subsistence supply base for the American forces in the zone of advance, north of Toul. Ten days later the first American field army was formed, followed gradually by the concentration of troops in the area served by the 21st between the Meuse and Moselle, until on the 12th of September, the first day of the St. Mihiel offensive, two American army corps and one French corps were in the front line and a number of divisions in reserve, or a total of some 400,000 men.\*

Almost one third of this number, 130,000 men, were

rationed by the Sorey Railhead, some 55,000 rations being transported daily by the light railway, the balance being handled by motor trucks. In addition to the daily or "automatic" rations, some 500,000 reserve rations were issued during this period, with a reserve of 300,000 to 500,000 rations piled up in the warehouses at Sorey.† In addition to rations and forage, a great deal of troop property was handled by the light railway. One division (the 89th) received all of their property in this manner. Personnel, Engineer material, planking and timbers, light railway sections, crushed stone, all provided no inconsiderable

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\* Lieut. Roberts, formerly with Sorey Railhead.

† Total troops engaged, Pont a Mousson to Les Eparges 600,000 men.



tonnage out of Sorey, and for a time, even water was a commodity offered for transportation to the front line.

Altogether during a period of something over two months, eleven divisions, two artillery brigades, numerous engineer and casual troops received rations, forage, and other supplies from Sorey.

This tonnage was handled from the Intermediate Supply Depots to Sorey by the Est Railway and set out on one of the two tracks reserved for the Americans in the French yard (the other track being reserved for empties returning to the French).

A Belgian engine, the 3107, a high wheeled old race-horse, was assigned to switching the loads over from the French yard to the railhead, spotting cars at the unloading platforms and pulling out the empties.

Over in the narrow gauge yard there was a 50 horse power gas tractor for the railhead switching and another of the same type assigned to the construction department, handling crushed stone from the quarry to the yard, spotting cars at the rail and timber dumps, etc.

Empties were spotted at the platforms during the night when possible and loading usually started at 7.00 A. M. As fast as a train of twelve cars was loaded, a road engine and crew were waiting to couple on and pull out. The first train was usually loaded by 8.30 A. M., followed by trains throughout the day at intervals of one to two hours. About 4.00 or 5.00 P. M. a meat train was sent out, consisting of two to four cars of fresh meat, filled to tonnage with other available loads. Loading for the day was usually finished by six or seven o'clock, and the movement of eighty standard gauge loads and one hundred narrow gauge loads was considered a pretty good day's work.

The light railway forces at Sorey, in addition to the round house and shop forces and the yard and road crews, consisted of an Assistant Train Master, with supervision over train crews and operation in the district; a yard master in charge of yard operation; a commercial agent

maintaining liaison with the Quartermaster Corps and other shippers and a clerical force.

Although Sorey was but fourteen kilometers from the German front line, very little interference was attempted by the enemy, during the many months of construction and operation of the terminal. German aviators often flew



*Deraiment on the Soixante Near Neuf Etang*

over the camp, doubtless taking many pictures, but not until late in the summer was an attempt made to bomb the railhead. Two daylight bombing expeditions were made against Sorey about that time, but luckily no damage was done.

It has been said that the railhead at Sorey was the best designed and constructed light railway yard in France. Whether or not such was the case, its capacity and facility of operation proved ample for the heavy demands placed upon it before and during the St. Mihiel drive. Now, however, like many of the old boom mining camps of the west, Sorey Railhead, its days of usefulness over, stands silent and deserted. The few American faces seen are those of strangers; doubtless even they will soon be gone.

## Wrecking on the Soixante

By Master Engineer Fred Lang

My first experience in wrecking was on the road between Boucq and Leonval, on a very dark night and while there was a heavy movement of troops and wagons on the highway alongside our track. A wagon which was being driven too close to the track was struck by one of our steam engines, the water tank of the engine sliding up on the wagon wheels, shifting the weight of the engine and tipping it over into the ditch, and injuring the fireman so badly that he was sent to the hospital where he remained for three weeks. We had five trains of ammunition waiting at Boucq for Leonval and in order to get the line open as quickly as possible we built a "shoofly" around the engine and had the ammunition trains moving over the new track in about an hour's time.

Then the wrecker appeared upon the scene. This outfit consisted of two artillery cars loaded with block and tackle, ties, blocking, sections of rails, etc. The men excavated and leveled a place large enough for the engine to be set upright. Into this was put a solid bed of ties, after which the block and tackle were put into use. In order to

get the engine upright we were obliged to use jacks, until we had it up to an angle of 45 degrees. A chain was fastened around the steam dome and a block and tackle was hooked into it, the other end of the tackle being anchored to a tree, and one of our steam engines did the work of further righting the wrecked engine. Then it was necessary to cut the main track and add enough sections to reach our engine, which was considerably below the level of the road.

This engine we rerailed in about two hours' time, but as this was our first experience, it took us much longer than it did later.

Just before the St. Mihiel drive we had a number of wrecks. Six steam engines were picked up in a period of three weeks preceding the drive, the last one being the night of September 12th, when a rush order of ammunition was to be taken up to Raulecourt. No steamer had ever gone beyond Edgewood on that line and there was no bal-last beyond that point. The track was on a mud fill which gave way when the first steamer attempted to cross from

Edgewood to Raulecourt, tipping the engine and one car over in the mud and water, making an all night's job. A plank and tie bottom was put in and about a foot and a half below the level of the engine. We put in an awful night, between digging in the mud and water, jacking up the engine, a great part of the work was necessary on account of the track being too soft to permit us to bring another steam engine to give the necessary assistance on the block and tackle. In addition to this we had to work without lights of any kind on account of Boche planes. There were two batteries of eight inch howitzers camouflaged along the track at Edgewood, some three hundred meters from us and they started shelling the Germans about nine o'clock. About midnight a big gun, which was hidden about five hundred feet behind us, cut loose with a roar. The first time we heard this gun we thought it was a big shell coming in and we all ducked and went over to the Salvation Army. There we got cups of hot chocolate or coffee which steadied our nerves and we returned to our labors. This about completed our wrecking on the St. Mihiel front. The drive being over, business dropped off considerably. Soon after this we took our wrecker and went over to the Argonne. We had a great deal of work to do in that country because of the light construction, lack of ballast and the generally poor condition of the line by reason of the excessive rainfall.

I will mention one night's work in this sector as an

instance of what the wrecking crew had to contend with. We were sent to Romagne, arriving there on November 8th, and started moving rations for the 2nd and 89th Divisions from Romagne to St. George and a siding near Andevanne, a distance of 17 kilometers. The track was in very bad shape, having been badly shot up. On November 9th, at 9.00 P. M., we left Romagne with fourteen gas tractors and 42 cars of rations (about 300 tons) for the 89th Division. The only man who had been over the line was the man on the leading engine. We had gone but five kilometers when his engine left the track and was in such shape that it had to be tipped over into the ditch to clear the main line. We then proceeded slowly until finally the leading train reported that they had found the end of the line at a road crossing. We went up and found a log across the track, which upon closer examination proved to be a tree which had been felled by an enemy shell, blocking both highway and railroad. About that time, some trucks happened along and with their aid the tree was pulled away and rolled to one side. We arrived at our destination about one o'clock. On the return trip things commenced to go to the bad and when daylight came we had two engines tipped over and two engines, double heading, in a shell hole. It took us all day to get our five engines back on the track, but they were on the job again that night as if nothing had happened.

## Telephone Communication

Realizing the impracticability of placing telegraph operators at each block station or shack, as they were called, the 21st Engineers decided to block their trains by telephone. They belonged to no division and could not depend on the detachments of Signal Corps who might be in the vicinity, so a telephone squad of our own was required. It was also found necessary to keep the different companies and detachments working over a wide territory in direct com-

munication with their principal exchanges. By slow growth we thus took a place in the telephone system of the A. E. F. and became so far as we know the only non-signal corps regiment to handle the telephone work for any section of the great system.

The telephone detail of the 21st was twelve men. For a time, during the offensive there were as many as forty men in the detail. The majority of them were telephone men in civil life and with but few exceptions the original twelve remained with the detail for the duration of the war. Line patrolmen at the front did not necessarily require an extensive knowledge of telephony. The main requirements of a patrolman was to be able to quickly locate a break in the line and to work under adverse circumstances.

Shell fire was the lineman's worst enemy, a seventy-seven shell breaking 5 meters away would tear down the line.

All lines in the active territory were strung on 18" stakes, and this wire was insulated. At the beginning we used the U. S. Field wire, 11 strand steel, 1 strand copper and well insulated. No. 17 R. C. twisted pair was also used but it did not give good field service as wire would lay on the damp ground for long periods.

When the line gang first started to work material was very scarce. The first line was built with No. 15 soft drawn iron wire on French poles, American brackets and insulators were used. After this line was completed a requisition was sent to S. C. for No. 14 iron wire and other necessary material. Some trouble was experienced in getting this wire as the 21st was not at this time recognized as a Signal Detachment. But after the switchboard was installed, the importance and efficiency of the organization was recognized and from this time on was much easier to



*Line in Forêt de la Reine*

munication with their headquarters, where the work was directed. The success with which our little telephone squad met these requirements caused other outfits in our vicinity who were associated with us in our work to desire communication with our switchboard. The Signal Corps recognized our little system as of some importance and gave us



secure material: in fact, all requisitions were filled without question. The Signal Corps and 21st Engineers from this time on, worked together.

During the first days of the telephone squad, each line came into a different office. This, of course, caused confusion and a W. E. No. 1 cordless switchboard was installed at headquarters to take care of our lines and drops to the more important offices in the building. This board accommodated ten lines with five conversations possible at one time, but we soon out-grew this and a second No. 1 cordless board was "cut in" parallel with the first board. This effect was accomplished by connecting the supervising drops of board No. 1 to board No. 2. This gave us a line capacity of twenty, but the instant conversation capacity remained at the original five. For the operation of these boards and the telegraph line that connected us with the Signal Corps telegraph system, we used five men, the third or night trick man handling both telephone and telegraph and receiving daily work reports.

Three weeks before the St. Mihiel drive commenced, the linemen were very busy building lines to ammunition dumps and extending the old lines. The night before the drive commenced a large amount of material was stored at Ansonville and Menil-la-Tour, 250,000 feet of No. 17 twisted pair and 38,000 feet single field wire. This was all

used in the line to Woinville and Thiaucourt, twenty-eight kilos being strung in the three days following the advance.

Shortly after the St. Mihiel drive, the 21st Regiment Engineers was ordered to the Argonne. Packing emergency material on a P. W. D. truck and leaving the rest of the material to be transported by rail, the gang moved. At this time there was no telephone communication for the L. R. in the Argonne.

The French were building from Dombasle to Esnes. The 21st made camp at Esnes and built a first class field line to Montfaucon. Much trouble was experienced on this line because of constant movement of artillery and tanks that were continually tearing down the wires.

Leaving two men to shoot trouble, the remainder of the gang moved to Cheppy and commenced construction of a line from Cheppy to Grand Pre. There was much work to be done at Vraincourt and there was shifting of men to build the necessary lines to headquarters.

The night the second drive was started a direct line, twenty-eight kilometers long, from headquarters at Vraincourt to Cheppy, was completed in twenty hours, giving headquarters connection with all the scattered detachments.

The linemen worked steadily for twenty-eight hours on this line, and after a few hours' sleep, work was commenced from Apremont north.

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## Work of the Electrical Department After the Armistice— Technical History

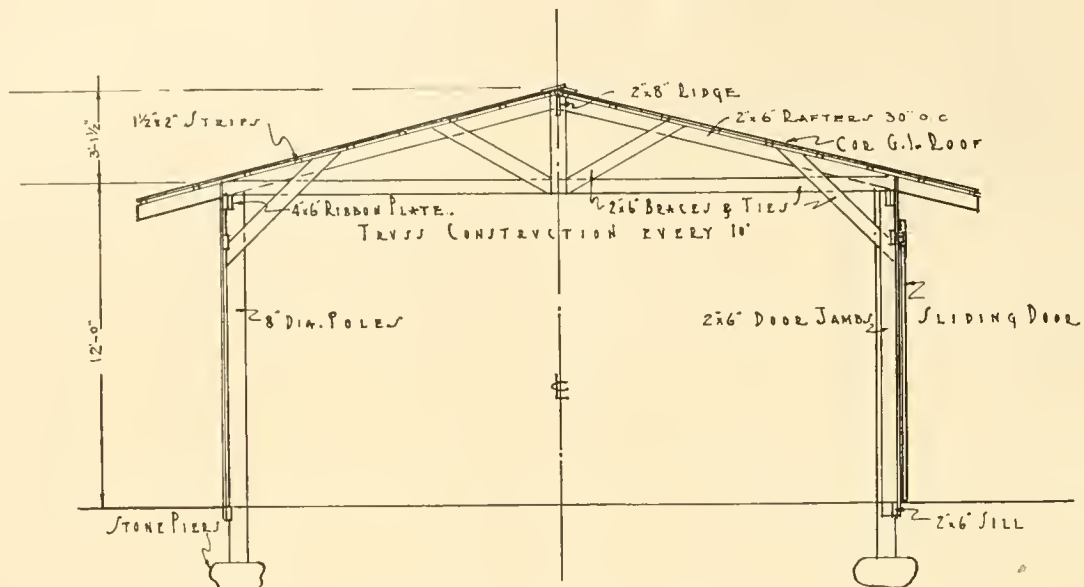
By Chalmer G. Price

The signing of the armistice caused the stopping of further work in the Argonne sector, and a small detachment of telephone men were ordered to Conflans, on November 17, 1918, to place in operation lines of communication for railroad service between Verdun and Conflans, and between the latter place and Briey, Metz, Audun, Longuyon and Longwy and intermediate points.

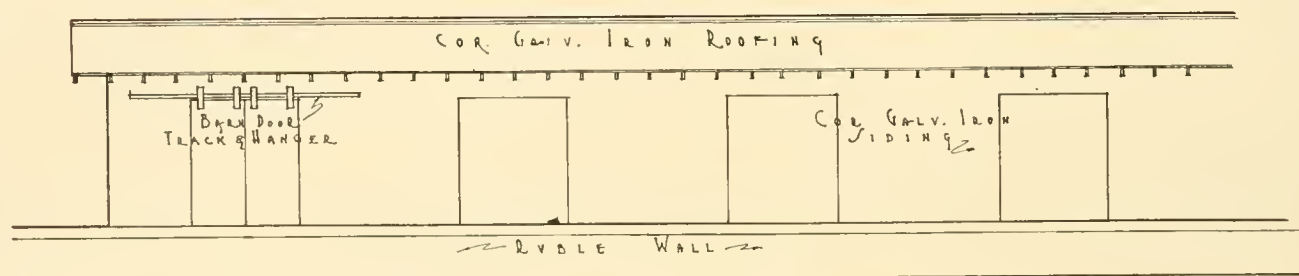
We arrived in Conflans on the 18th and started at once on the line to Verdun, much of which, out in the open country, was in good repair, but near stations and in the area of shell fire the lines were badly wrecked. In the Conflans yard they were in very bad shape, and for fast work we strung twisted pair field wire for all of our circuits from the edge of the railroad yard into the depot building. Shortly after our arrival, the work was taken up by the 56th Engineers in conjunction with the 21st, and as the lines toward Longwy, Briey and Metz were in fine condition, it was only a short time until communication was established with all these points. In some cases the old German instruments were still intact and in operation. In a majority of cases it was only necessary to pick out a pair and track it through, perhaps stringing in a small section of "twist" now and then to have a good circuit. Later, we took over the entire maintenance and operation of the lines of the division and maintained same with a forty-drop board at Conflans and smaller boards at Longuyon and Audun, until relieved, some time in December, of all telephone and telegraph work by a detachment of the 414th Telegraph Battalion.

In addition to telephone work, it was necessary to restore electric lighting to the various railroad stations, yards and shops. We started in a small way, using a French 17 KW gasoline generator set, installed near the station at Conflans. Practically all of the wiring in the building had been destroyed and here again our much used American twisted field telephone pair played a big part until we could get some copper wire from the S. O. S. The lights do not burn very brightly when field telephone wire is used, but we needed some light. Later we put in good copper circuits and used a No. 17 copper twisted pair for inside wiring, as it did not have to pass an American underwriters' board. It gave fine service.

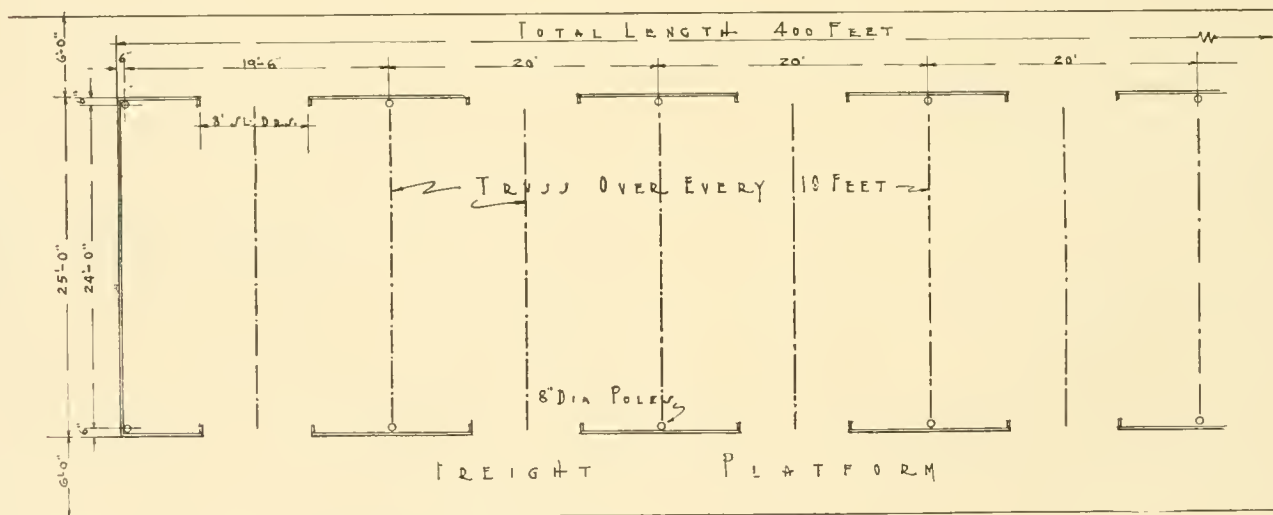
As soon as the French got their power circuits in working order throughout this territory, we obtained service from their 10,000-volt lines for Conflans, Baroncourt, Audun, Briey and several other places. At some of the places we used power for shop work and pumping water. In nearly all cases we made our own transformer installation, and built our own lines, as the French were short of both men and material. The regiment was to be concentrated in Lahry, at an old French army post, so it was up to us to light the place. Circuits were strung and lights were installed. Then we found our voltage low, owing to the extra load involved. We moved the old generator set up and worked in a cut-in and cut-out system for the more important circuits, supplying sufficient voltage to these from dusk to eleven o'clock. The remainder of the time the circuit was energized by the French power.



TRANSVERSE SECTION.



PARTIAL ELEVATION.



PARTIAL PLAN.

- TYPICAL - WAREHOUSE - CONSTRUCTION -  
 - SORCY - RAILHEAD -  
 - ENGINEERING - DEPT - 21ST - ENGINEERS - V-S - ARMY -  
 DRAWN BY W. A. STONE



# Mechanical Department, 21st Regiment Engineers (L. R.)

By Albert J. Link, M. E.

The mechanical department, in charge of Captain M. M. Sheedy, was called upon to build, as well as repair, machinery of all kinds. Shortly after our arrival in France, a detail was sent to La Havre to choose the machinery for the Sorey shops. Early in March the following machines were installed: One shaper, one planer, one 12-inch lathe, one 14-inch lathe. A single cylinder gas engine served as the power plant. Thus equipped, we started operations.

Water next received our attention. To obtain this it was necessary to dig a well twelve feet in diameter and forty-eight feet deep. We laid 4,000 feet of 4-inch main to a reservoir and 7,000 feet of distribution pipe to four



*Wye at Boucq*

standpipes, twelve barracks and to twelve faucets in the yards and shops. To pump this water we installed a two-stage centrifugal gasoline motor-driven pump having a capacity of 200 gallons per minute, and one single-stage centrifugal motor-driven pump having a capacity of 6,000 gallons per hour. The water consumption was 85,000 gallons daily. This work was completed in thirty days.

About February 15th the first locomotives arrived. These were of the gasoline 35 h. p. type. Shortly afterward the 50 h. p. type were received. After making minor adjustments, these locomotives were placed in service. Having no spare parts, we were obliged to make all repair parts in our machine shop. At the time of the St. Mihiel drive we were operating 126 gasoline engines in the Toul sector.

We were given a standard gauge yard derrick of English make which we assembled and used in handling our cars, which arrived about April 1st. We received 105 flats and fifty-five gondolas, having capacity of 22,000 pounds each.

We assembled the cars at the rate of eight cars per day, driving ninety-two three-quarter-inch rivets in each and placing brasses in all trucks, fitting up brake rigging and

standards and placing bodies on trucks. The gondolas had no device for holding the drop doors, so we made patterns and cast iron grab locks. These were so arranged that, regardless of the load bearing against the doors, the locks could be released and the doors dropped. It was in the gondolas and flats that most of the ammunition was taken to the front. It was possible to load 248 six-inch shells, each weighing ninety-four pounds, on one of these cars.

After completing the work of assembling cars, Captain Sheedy conceived the idea of equipping the flats with stretcher bearers or yokes which would accommodate not only our stretchers, but also those of our allies. These yokes were suspended from standards in such a manner that the stretcher would swing clear of the car body, thus permitting the transportation of wounded with the least amount of jolt or discomfort. When not in use, these yokes were carried underneath the body of the car.

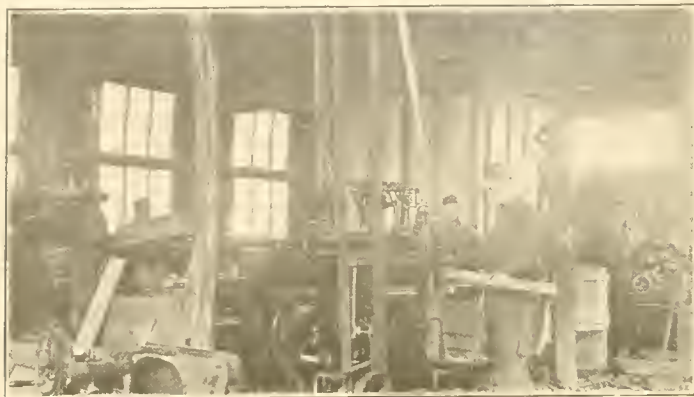
It required three minutes' time to convert an ammunition or ration car into a comfortable ambulance car having space for eight stretchers. It was in these cars that very many of the wounded were moved to the hospitals or the standard gauge and Red Cross trains.

About April 15th the steam locomotives arrived. They were of the saturated 2-6-2 type, cylinders 9 by 12 inches and carrying 178 pounds of steam. These engines were fitted with side tanks. The coal bin, rear end, had a capacity of 1,700 pounds. We had no repair parts for these engines, so we made patterns and had steel, brass and cast iron castings made at the French foundries. The vapor machines, as our gallant colleagues, the French, called our steam engines, often derailed when trying to take a 20-meter curve. After making steel rockers, which we stayed into the trailer springs, thereby raising the rear end of the engine and replacing the forward pedestal wedges with dead wedges, we found that they would curve quite freely.

While meeting these unusual railroad conditions, which frequently taxed our organization to the limit, we were required to do much mechanical work for the First Army. We designed and built mooring pedestals for machine guns, apparatus for cutting barb wire entanglements, braces for men with broken limbs, supports for men with bullet holes in their necks, carriages, supports and apparatus for men with body wounds, also brackets and trolleyed yokes for the serious cases, which were moved to the S. O. S. We were called upon to make repairs to aeroplanes, motor trucks, tanks, tractors, stone crushers, air compressors and diverse other machinery. In addition to this work, we made all special crossovers, switch points and compromise joints, besides many of the switch stands and track bolts used by the construction department.

After several months of operation, it became evident

that the practice of filling gasoline tanks by hand would have to be discontinued, so we installed a filling system: a 1,500-gallon gasoline tank was placed fourteen feet under-



*Interior Machine Shop, Sorey Gare*

ground. This for protection, for we were being bombed regularly. For the purpose of accommodating pump plunges, a special supplementary well was sunk six feet underground. The daily gasoline consumption was 1,200 gallons.

Upon completion of this work, we built a system supplying water to Mobile Hospital No. 29. Another system was put in the prison camp at Ligny, where 3,000 prisoners were handled daily. The water consumption was 15,000 gallons daily. A similar system was put in the prison camp at Pagny.

Midsummer found us operating quite successfully, in spite of the fact that our steam engines would not burn the coal which was mostly slack, but would draw it into the flues, stopping them completely. To prevent this, holes were drilled into the fire box door, supplying the necessary overdraft. Nozzles were made for the exhaust stand that not only split the exhaust, but caused it to rotate through the stack and come out in rings of steam. The boilers required much attention, for when on the road, water was syphoned out of shell holes. The doughboys would wash in the water, leaving it very soapy, so that when used in the boilers it caused foaming. Sand was scarce, yet altogether necessary, especially on the 15-pound steel, for here the tractive effort exerted was so much greater than the adhesion between driver and rail that the drivers would slip almost constantly. This caused myriads



*Engine Repair Shop, Sorey Gare*

of sparks to ascend skyward from the stack. It was this sparking, together with the flashes from the fire door, that made our locomotives so undesirable for night work, not-

withstanding the fact that one misinformed writer in the United States explained that we used these engines at night only. We operated eighty of these engines in the Toul sector.

After the St. Mihiel drive of September 12th, our shops were moved to Dombasle, in the Argonne. Conditions here were even worse than in the Toul sector. The Germans had built the railroad and had placed extreme elevations in the curves. Innumerable derailments caused much delay, for it was very difficult to rerail our equipment on German high steel. The French, who were operating jointly with us, used ratchet jacks for retracking. This method did not satisfy us, so we designed buzzard wing rerailing frogs. These were made of steel and proved invaluable, for they eliminated much of the hard work and the time required to rerail was reduced considerably.

The water situation was bad and almost all the water had to be syphoned from shell holes. The Germans had syphoned all the water out of the holes nearest the track, so we had to reach out to those farther from the rail. The syphon hose with which our engines were equipped were faulty in construction. They were of the two case type with a coil shaper spring between the inner and outer shell. When creating a vacuum in the hose, the inner lining would collapse, thus closing the hose up tightly. The Germans



*Sorey Blacksmith Shop*

had left some paper hose, which, after being coated with paint to seal the pores, was used as extension line, making it possible to reach the isolated shell holes.

Immediately after the signing of the armistice, we were sent to Longuyon to take over the standard gauge railroad, which the Germans had held for four years. Here we found things in a bad condition, filth and disorder everywhere. The water system had been partly demolished, the reservoir punctured with bullets, the piston pump filled with an assortment of monkey wrenches, open wrenches and scrap iron, the thrust on the centrifugal pump was moved out of alignment, thus making it impossible to create a vacuum in the suction line. The motor was grounded. The wires on the switchboard were either disconnected or crossed, and the piston head in one of the engines was loosened so that when starting it punctured the cylinder head. This pumping plant, when in order, had a daily capacity of 500,000 gallons. After thirty hours' repair work, we started supplying the locomotives with water. The coal derricks, too, were put out of commission, so we were obliged to shovel the coal into the tenders.

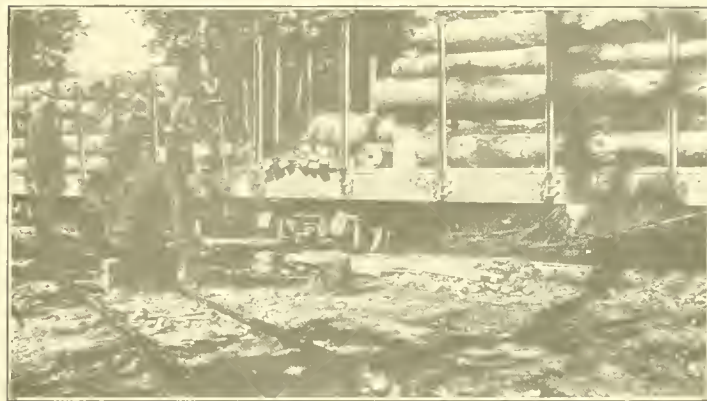
We enjoyed a privilege that seldom falls to the lot of the railroad men: that of going into an engine house and choosing power, for the Germans had left thirty-five locomotives of either French, Belgian, Dutch or their own make. Having chosen a German superheater, we made the first trip to Conflans. The track was intact, with the



exception of that blown out by bombs in the yards. After returning to Longnyon, we were ordered to Longwy. We found the tunnels mined, so we were forced to postpone the trip until demolition plants had been removed. At Longwy, things were in a bad way for us. The switches were disconnected, the interlocking plants inoperative and forty-eight engines were parked on the main line. The pump bearing oil rungs were removed and the oil boxes filled with sand. After fifty hours' work, we had things in such shape that we started moving refugees and prisoners released by the Germans at the rate of 8,000 per day. After several days the Army of Occupation moved in, and we handled their equipment as well as rations. After one month of operation, we were moved to Audun. This place, like the others which the Germans had held, was in bad shape. Wires to transformers were cut. The monster machine shop was reduced to a junk heap. All leather belting was removed, gears were stripped, machine ways and carriages broken. The steam pumps were disconnected, the boiler head bolts loosened, permitting the ring to blow out, the volt and ammeters were taken from the switchboards, the brushes taken out of the motors and the release valves removed from the suction lines. After twenty hours' work, we started pumping water. The plant, when in working order, had a capacity of 250 gallons per minute.

Our experiences were so altogether varied and thrilling

that it would be an injustice to both officers and men if we failed to record the spirit with which they entered upon the hardest and most menial work, as well as the most



*Derailed Narrow Gauge Car North of Mont Sec*

complicated. A great cosmopolitan group, representing almost every State in the Union, recruited from railroads, laboratories, testing plants and factories, these men who delighted in solving the problems so foreign to those of civil railroading. While they may drop back into the oblivion of civil life unheralded and unsung, yet they have the satisfaction of conscience that goes with work well done.

## Abainville Shops

The light railway central shops and yards were constructed at Abainville (Meuse), a village of about two hundred inhabitants, forty kilometers south of St. Mihiel, for the purpose of assembling, storing and repairing light railway track, locomotives, tractors, cars, etc., for the American 60 cm. gauge railways, and the forwarding of the same from the standard gauge railhead up to the advance zone.

On April 9th Companies 12 and 13 of the First Motor Mechanics arrived at Abainville and on April 24th began breaking ground for the main track to the shops. On April 26th the first material was unloaded and May 1st witnessed the beginning of actual construction of the plant.



*Interior Machine Shop, Sorcy Gare*

Work continued until June 1st, when the concentration of German troops on the St. Mihiel front caused a cessation of activities and all buildings which have been erected were

mined, preparatory to their destruction in case of a German advance, and plans for moving the plant farther to the rear were under consideration. A detachment of men from the 1st Regiment, Motor Mechanics, however, continued assembling equipment during this period.

On July 27th construction and operation were resumed and continued without further interruption until November 11th. With the signing of the armistice practically all construction ceased. Operation thereafter consisted of running repairs only.

The plant, when construction ceased, covered approximately ninety acres, being made up of the following units: A high duty pumping station on the bank of the Ornain River, a tributary of the Meuse, which comprised two motor-driven centrifugal pumps of 5,000 gallons per hour capacity, one for emergency use only. Water was pumped 3,500 feet through a pipe line to a concrete reservoir of 130,000 gallons capacity, constructed on the hillside above, from where water was distributed for general use throughout the plant. A drinking water plant consisting of twenty-two wells, with one three-plunger, five horsepower, motor driven pump raising water into a water tower of 20,000 capacity.

The power plant, housed in a steel building, 60 feet by 42 feet, consisted of three 300 horsepower horizontal water tubes, 200 pounds pressure, hand fired boilers erected two in a battery and one single, each boiler having a smoke stack eighty-five feet high, supplying steam for driving two 250 horsepower simple steam engines, directly connected to two 250 watt, 125 volt, direct current generators. The power was used for operating the various machines and to light the plant. Two 500 cubic feet capacity air

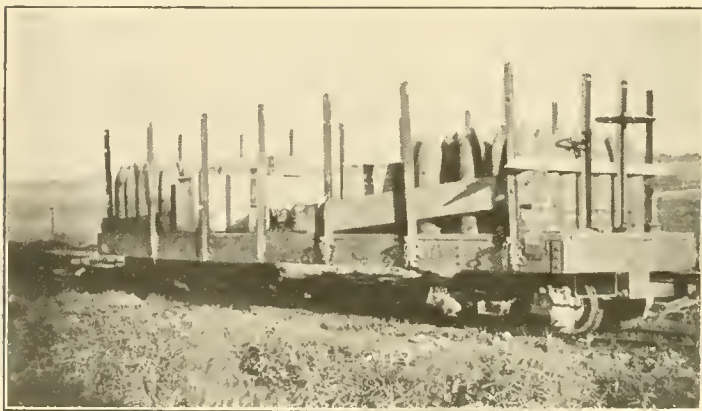
compressors at 200 pounds pressure were steam driven. The exhaust steam from the engines was utilized in feed water heaters for the boilers. Live steam was used to heat



*Mobile Machine Shop at Sorey Gare*

the offices and quarters. The power plant was spanned twenty feet above the floor by a five-ton hand operated crane used in assembling and repairing the engines.

The shop superintendent's office, with a drafting room above, and store room, were housed in a steel building 150 by 42 feet with a wooden partition forty feet from the west end separating the offices and drafting room from the store room, which contained a complete supply of tools and material necessary for the repair and maintenance of the light railway equipment. An addition, 300 feet by 42 feet, of wooden frame and steel, was later added to the store room. The planing mills, carpenter and pattern shops were located in a wooden front and sheet steel building 250 feet by 42 feet. The machine and repair shops were contained in a building 200 feet by 42 feet by 21 feet, spanned for a length of 70 feet by a five-ton electric traveling crane. The car shop was a steel building, 175 feet by 42 feet, with three tracks for setting up gondola and box cars. Another track adjacent was used by a five-ton locomotive traveling crane for handling the trucks and the car frames. On the opposite side of the shop were located three 45 cubic feet, 100-pound pressure air compressors used to operate the riveting hammers. In what was termed the upper yard, the car bodies, tractors, locomotives, etc., were stored and finally assembled in the shops or along yard assembling tracks. In the lower yard the rails, ties, bolts, etc., were stored. There complete track sections



*Car Load of Ammunition*

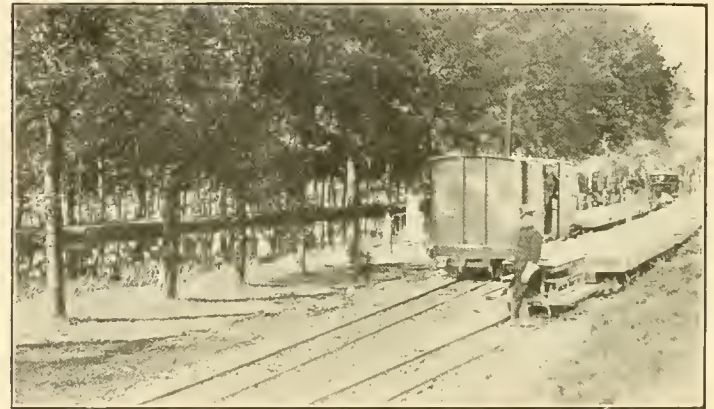
five meters long, with steel ties attached, were assembled and stored ready for shipment to the front, and included not only straight sections, but also curved, switch and

crossing sections. Two steam locomotive cranes, one five and one twenty ton, were used for unloading, handling and reloading material in the upper and lower yards. A total of 2,307 cars of all types were erected, exclusive of approximately 400 dumps, construction cars and speeders. The daily output about the time of the armistice was an average of thirty-two cars.

The erecting shop for assembling and repairing steam locomotives, a steel building, 42 feet by 200 feet by 28 feet, had two tracks, 3 feet 6 inches above the floor level the full length of the building, one on each side and one at the grade and with a pit through the center. The greatest number of locomotives assembled in any one day was nine, with a daily average of three for the period, the total number assembled being 194.

The gas tractor, tin, pipe and welding shops were housed in a steel building 200 feet by 42 feet by 28 feet, equipped with two 10-ton and one 5-ton electric traveling cranes. The greatest number of tractors assembled in any one was six, the daily average being two. A total of 121 fifty and sixty-three horsepower tractors were assembled. The smith and boiler shops were housed in a steel building 60 feet by 42 feet.

The oil house, a steel building, 45 feet by 42 feet,



*Narrow Gauge Siding, Tacon*

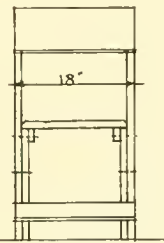
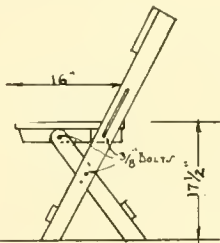
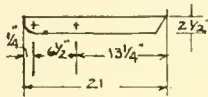
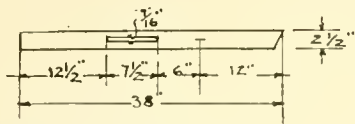
afforded storage for all oils, paints and waste. The round-house, a wooden frame and sheet iron building, 50 feet by 60 feet, with an office 12 feet by 12 feet, had three tracks running directly through the building, with two inspection pits, 5 feet by 5 feet by 5 feet.

The officers' quarters consisted of three adobe buildings, 175 feet by 50 feet, connected at the rear by two passages double open fireplace into a main assembly or reading room twenty-two rooms each. The center building divided by a double open fire place into a main assembly or reading room and a dining room with kitchen at the rear, completed these very comfortable quarters.

The housing facilities for the men comprised thirty-four Adrian barracks used as sleeping quarters and eleven used as mess halls, kitchens and company offices. The remainder of the camp consisted of a Salvation Army hut, three Y. M. C. A. huts, a commissary, three garages and a stable.

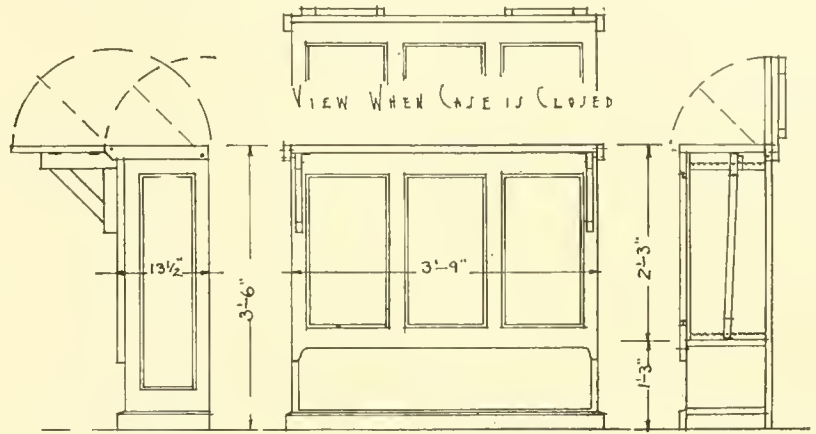
The first organization of the 21st, Company N, arrived at Abainville September 21, 1918, and it was followed shortly by the Third and Fourth Battalions and Company O. At the present time, April 1, 1919, the shops are being almost entirely operated by the men of Companies G, N and O, located at Abainville.



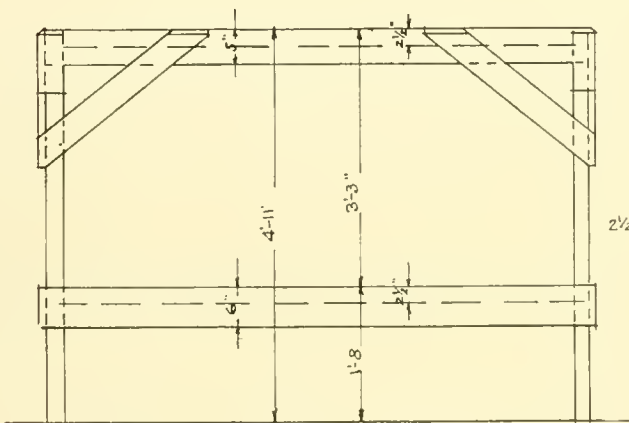


DETAIL OF JTD. CHAIR.

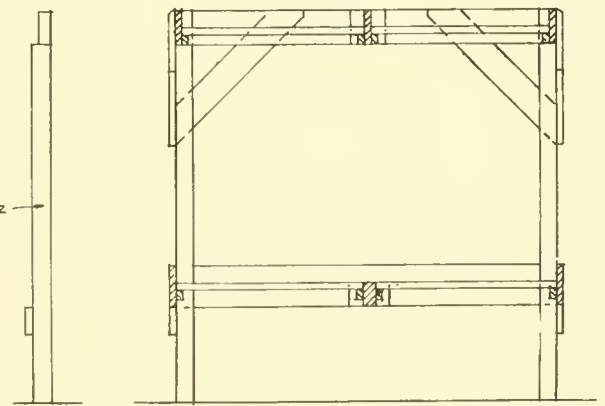
MAPS, DRAWINGS, ETC. ARE FILED IN STIFF PAPER FOLDERS.



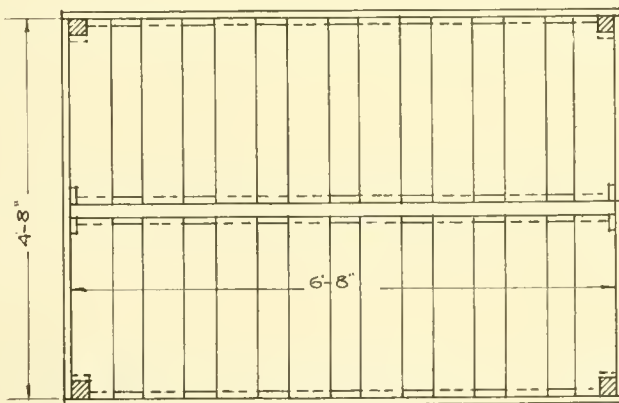
SIDE. VERTICAL MAP FILING CASE. SECTION.  
FRONT ELEVATION



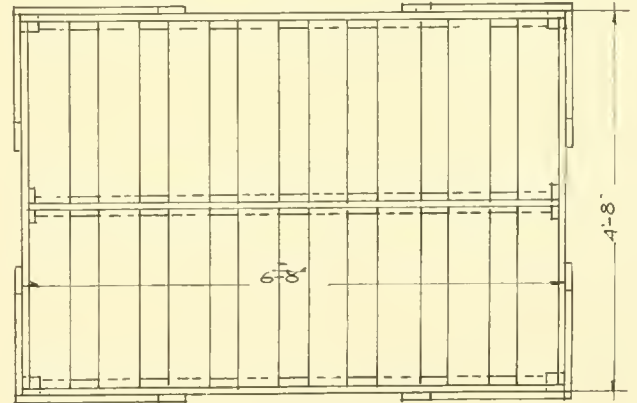
~ SIDE ~ ELEVATION ~



~ POST ~ ~ TRANSVERSE ~ SECTION ~



PLAN OF LOWER BUNK



PLAN OF UPPER BUNK



BUNK KNOCKED DOWN  
AND PACKED FOR SHIPMENT

- DETAILS - OF - FOUR-MAN - BUNK - OFFICE - CHAIR -  
- AND - VERTICAL - MAP - FILING - CASE -  
- ENGINEERING - DEPT. - 21ST - ENGINEERS - V.S. ARMY -  
- DRAWN - BY - W.L. GARREN - & - W.A. STONE -

# The Organization and Work of the Supply Department, Twenty-First Engineers (L. R.)

By M. E. James N. Mac Laren

The Supply Department was organized at Camp Grant in the early days when the regiment was first forming at that place, and was under the leadership of Major Lunsford E. Oliver, C. of E., U. S. A. His untiring labor



*L. R. Tank Cars (2,000 Gallons)*

permitted the regiment to depart for overseas service fully equipped for any contingency that might arise.

It might be well to state that at the beginning the Supply Department faced a different and much more difficult task than confronts the ordinary army engineer organization. Under the tables of organization that were laid down as a guide, the regiment was required to equip itself with all the paraphernalia and materials that a regiment of pioneer engineers would carry. After arrival, it was necessary to provide materials for track construction, track maintenance and supplies for the operation of trains and motor transportation. In addition to the materials for engineer work, it was necessary to keep the men properly clothed, equipped and armed, while most important was the task of keeping them supplied with food. It may be safely stated at the beginning of this article that the 21st Regiment of Engineers (L. R.) have never suffered for want of food, and that they have always been clothed and equipped as well as any organization in France, and better than many.

At Camp Grant the work under Major Oliver consisted chiefly of clothing and equipping the men as they came in from the recruit depots, a good many of them in civilian attire, and the drawing of the material needed for a regiment of pioneer engineers, demolition outfits, intrenching outfits, reconnaissance material, surveying and drafting room instruments and material, photographic supplies and the material needed to enable the regiment to sustain itself in the field, such as field ranges, tents, tarpaulins, etc. In the meantime, while Major Oliver was successfully carrying on this work, which, as an afterthought, consisted not only in getting the material, but accounting for it in

the complicated and burdensome method of army accountability, the special technical material was ordered and everything was done to hasten its delivery to the port of embarkation, from whence it was shipped direct overseas, consigned to the 21st Engineers (L. R.), A. E. F., France.

Practically all of this material was ordered through Colonel Milliken's office and the lists were drawn up there by Messrs. Evans and Taylor. These lists were placed with Mr. A. B. Thompson of the purchasing department of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and it is due in a large measure to his personal efforts that this material was secured promptly. Early in November, 1917, Captains G. C. Lightner and J. C. Rill, then first lieutenants, went east, charged with the important mission of doing everything that could be done to secure delivery of this material and get it shipped with the least possible delay to the port of embarkation. These officers secured from Colonel Milliken's office copies of all the purchase order that Mr. Thompson had placed, and during the month of November worked practically all the time in an effort to have it ready and delivered before the regiment left for overseas.

They faced a difficult problem. Every factory and jobbing house with which orders had been placed were being rushed to full capacity. The railroad companies were congested and it was a difficult problem in those days to effect delivery even after shipments had been delivered to the transportation companies. They secured the material by being always on the job and using diplomacy and tact. They solved the problem of transporting the small shipments, the greater share of which originated in or around Philadelphia, by securing from the



*Car Shops at Abainville*

Pennsylvania Railroad an express car and holding all of these small shipments until the last possible moment and having the car shipped by express to the port.

When the regiment reached Camp Merritt it was found that the War Department had ordered Major Oliver back to Camp Grant and that he could not accompany the regi-



ment to France. Lieutenant Lightner was named as his successor, and as we were still under the above mentioned property accountability, the accounts had to be audited and the property transferred from Major Oliver to Lieutenant Lightner. This was done on December 25th by our late Lieut. Colonel Slifer. During the last few days at Camp Merritt, the supplies necessary for overseas individual equipment that were not available at Camp Grant were drawn from the Governor Island depot. Some of them were not received until the last minute, and there was no time to distribute them at Camp Merritt, and later on at sea the Supply Department set up a storeroom on one of the decks and distributed the goods there. While at sea the purchase orders placed by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and handled by Lieutenants Lightner and Rill were checked over, a system of cross indexing worked out and they were listed so that any information desired, such as what the purchase order covered and who it was placed with, what time it had been shipped, when it had left the port for overseas, and, in case it had not yet been shipped, the time delivery had been promised. Other information that it was thought would be needed was made available.

When the regiment landed at Brest Companies A, B, C and D were sent to Gievres, Company E and Regimental Headquarters to Nevers and Company F to Jonchery. At Nevers the Supply Department established a warehouse and moved their supplies into it. Captain Pumphrey, then Lieutenant, with a detail of men was sent to the base ports to keep his eyes open for the property shipped to the 21st Engineers and to see that when it came in it was sent under convoy to Nevers. It is due to Captain Pumphrey's work at the base ports that the greater share of the material sent overseas reached us, as the policy was then being inaugurated that all supplies shipped overseas would be pooled upon their arrival here; that is, taken into some base depot, and in order to get it out requisitions must be submitted through regular channels. The A. E. F. at that time was very far from being well organized, and the channels were a dark secret to practically every one.

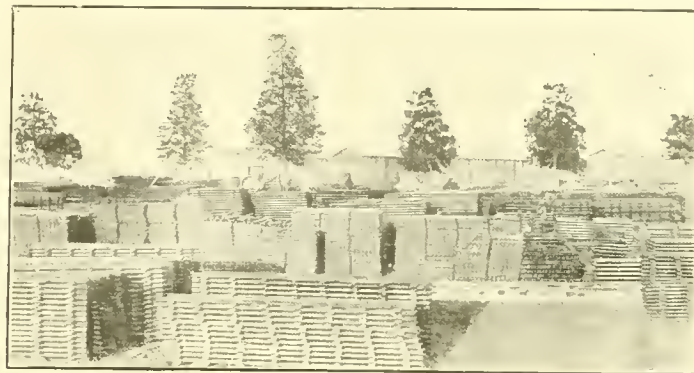
At Nevers Company E constructed a considerable amount of track and built several barracks. It was necessary to obtain tools for this work, and they were drawn from the warehouse. In addition to the tools needed for this job, a stock of tools for track building was drawn from the warehouse and in addition, water wagons, more tarpaulins, more tents, as well as such things as field ranges, garbage cans, etc.



*Abainville Car Shops*

In the early part of February a detachment of E Company was sent to Sorey in the Toul sector, and it was definitely decided upon by the powers that be that the Toul sector was to be the scene of the greater share of our labors. The material that had been coming into Nevers from the base ports was reloaded and shipped to Sorey.

About the 16th of February a sergeant and private from the warehouse were sent to Sorey to look after the material that would be coming in there and to establish a warehouse and get things started. About ten days later the headquarters detachment, including the balance of the supply house personnel, moved into Sorey. The material started



*Abainville Material Yard*

coming in very fast. The French military unloading dock was pretty well covered by such things as a large direct connected generator, a lathe or two, picks, shovels, axes, lanterns, water buckets, files, hammers and, in fact, all the material needed for shop maintenance and railroad construction and maintenance.

It had been the original idea to keep the material that was strictly regimental and special engineer material in separate warehouses under different officers, and each warehouse with its own personnel, work independently of each other. This idea was changed shortly after headquarters arrived at Sorey, and it was decided to build a warehouse with suitable track accommodations, both narrow and standard, and unloading platforms to handle the material and supplies that would be needed. Work was soon begun on the warehouse, 165 feet by 50 feet, and it was rapidly rushed to completion. All the material was gotten in, then sorted, classified, inventoried and stock record started, consisting of a card system that would show the amount exactly on hand, the receipts and issues.

During the time that the warehouse was being built, the organization that handled the material and the records in the new office was being formed. While at Nevers the supply office received the cheering information contained in General Orders No. 74, Headquarters, American Expeditionary Force, series of 1917, that property accountability for field organizations while in France would be discontinued. This lightened the office work tremendously and took considerable weight off the supply officer's mind.

The regiment at this time was working for, and its commanding officer was reporting to, the Director of Light Railroads and Roads. The Department of Light Railways and Roads soon recommended shipping into Sorey various road building materials, and material for bridges, such as pit props, sills, etc., and a large amount of other material, such as ties, rails, bolts, angle bars, etc. In the early part of May Colonel Peck was appointed engineer of light railways and roads, with supervision over all work of this nature in the Toul sector. The regiment up to that time had been drawing rations and various regimental articles and equipment from the 1st and 23rd Divisions, which then occupied the Toul sector. Shortly after Colonel Peck was appointed as engineer of light railways and roads, it was decided that it would be more efficient to draw these supplies direct from the various depots. The supply office

had, after several attempts, managed to secure through Sergeant-Major Donecker a copy of General Order No. 44, 1918, that outlined the supply system of the A. E. F. and cleared up the puzzle of the military channels.

Arrangements were made to secure shipments of rations direct from Is-sur-Tille for the 21st Engineers and for



*Inside the Warehouse*

the 23rd, 28th and 40th Engineers, who were located in the same sector, and who were reporting to Colonel Peck. Arrangements were also made to ship these rations by narrow gauge railroad instead of by truck, as had been the method of delivery up to that time. Soon after this system was inaugurated it was decided that, as the supply needed by the 23rd, 28th and 40th Engineers were similar to the supplies used by the 21st Engineers, that it would be more efficient to have these supplies drawn through the supply department of the 21st, who would fill such items of the requisition as were in stock and consolidate the requisitions with their own and submit to the proper authority for filling. This, in effect, made the warehouse at Sorey a sort of petite army park and all classes of material were ordered.

During all this time material continued to come in from the Department of the Light Railways and Roads and was unloaded and stored at Sorey yards under the supervision of Lieutenant Charles S. Heebner, who somewhere around the first of May was appointed assistant supply officer, reporting to Captain Lightner. Around the 10th of August the First Army was formed and the 21st, as well as the others under Colonel Peck's supervision, were transferred to the chief engineer, First Army. The supply department of the engineer's office of the First Army followed out the policy used by the D., L., R. & R. to ship to Sorey all kinds of road and railroad material. This grew in volume and reached the peak about the 20th of August and from then on it was a poor day that did not see twenty-five cars of material consigned to the chief engineer of the First Army unloaded in the Sorey yards. Part of this material was stored, but the greater share was shipped over the narrow gauge and as the time drew near for the St. Mihiel major offensive, advance parks were established directly behind the lines at strategic points and fully equipped with tools and material needed for track and road building.

July 1st Captain Lightner, the supply officer, went to the school of the line at Langres and Lieutenant Heebner, his assistant, was made acting supply officer.

During the month of August troops continued to pour into the Toul sector and those allied with the 21st numbered between 6,500 and 7,000. These were all rationed and equipped through the supply department of the 21st. Lieutenant Ivor Kenway was in the supply office to look after the interests of the chief engineer's office, and late in August Lieutenant Hubbard of the 58th Engineers, was sent to the supply office to assist in handling the material being shipped in for the chief engineer and during the strenuous days when preparations were in full swing for the St. Mihiel drive, did valuable work in establishing the advance dumps.

All the time the regiment continued construction and operation and in addition established their telephone and telegraph service, men from the organization doing the work. The supply department had to keep everybody equipped. Engineer Wilkinson, in charge of building construction, had to be kept supplied with nails, corrugated roofing, lumber, tar paper, hammers, saws and other supplies and tools. Engineer Maginn, in charge of masonry, had to have cement, lime, trowels, hoes, rakes, etc. Captain Sheedy and Lieutenant Chandler, in charge of repair work at Sorey and Menil-la-Tour respectively, had to be equipped with such things as emery paper, grinding compound, oxygen, acetylene, hammers, monkey wrenches, files and other shop material and tools. Major Ryan's department had the operating end of the game, and had to be supplied with gasoline and other operating supplies. The Track Construction and Maintenance Department, under the direct supervision of Colonel Slifer, needed shovels, picks, track tools, track levels and gauges, brush hooks and other track material. It took a bunch of stationery and office supplies to keep the paper work going, and rations had to be kept on the move. The writer remembers distinctly making up one requisition and among other items it contained one Austin gasoline road roller, three pounds fine emery dust and ten tons of 70 per cent. dynamite, while during the same day we made requisition for 3,000 suits of clothing and in the office material needed occurred the item of common or garden variety of pin. A few days later we made requisition for thirty-five locomotives and twenty-five kilometers assembled 25-pound 60



*Freight House, Conflans*

cm. track. An idea can thus be gained of the wide scope of materials handled by the supply department.

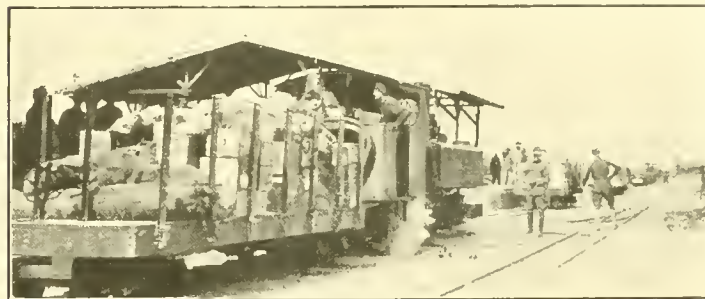
Shortly after the reduction of the St. Mihiel salient, the 21st Engineers followed the fortunes of the First Army and moved into the Argonne. The supply office went to Dombasle and Regimental Headquarters to Vraincourt.



This was an ideal arrangement from the supply office's viewpoint, and the writer recommends that in future wars regimental headquarters be stationed about fifteen miles from the supply office. At Dombasle the work consisted merely of supplying the 21st with the necessities for railway operation and track maintenance, clothing and rations. Shortly before the armistice was signed, Lieutenant Heebner was relieved as supply officer and Captain H. C. Dudley, from Colonel Peek's office, First Army Headquarters, was named as his successor. It was intended at that time to establish at Dombasle a warehouse and yard similar to the one in Sorey that would handle all light railway material for the First Army. The signing of the armistice prevented this arrangement. Shortly after the signing of the armistice, the regiment moved to Conflans and was transferred to broad gauge work. There the work of the supply office consisted in supplying the regiment with rations, clothing, etc., the material needed for the railroad work being handled by the supply department of the 24th Grand Division, Transportation Corps.

It would hardly be fitting to close this article without mentioning Inbad, the tailor, who is soldiering in the army under the alias of Jerry. Jerry, before the war, was a first class tailor in Chicago. He has been the regimental tailor since the days at Camp Grant. We also want to make mention of the work done by Gottfried Schneiderman, commonly known to his friends as Van Carl, who has been the regimental shoemaker. At Sorey and Dombasle the regimental tailor shop and the regimental shoe repair shop were under the supervision of the regimental supply officer and both of these shops did very effective work in repairing clothing and these men have worked faithfully and well for the regiment. Inbad has been assisted by Frisky Risky Riska. Little Friska's chief occupation is hitting the ball and saying little. When the regiment moved to Conflans it was found necessary to find room for both of these shops in some building other than the warehouse, due to lack of room, and the shops have been under the supervision of the adjutant. When these two shops left the protecting wing of the supply office they fell into dark days. The poor tailors have been compelled to spend considerable time in the guardhouse. Why they

were compelled to do this seems to be a bit of mystery, but we understand that officers' uniforms intended for some sales commissary with the Army of Occupation on the Rhine disappeared from the car in which they were traveling and it is claimed by the M. P. that these uniforms were found in the regimental tailor shop. The fact that



*Ration Train, Sorey Yard*

the accusation is made by the M. P. sort of militates against it, and we are very much inclined to believe, well, let us be charitable, and say that the M. P.'s have been badly mistaken and we hope that Inbad will soon be set at liberty.

Mention should also be made of the close co-operation given this regiment by Captain L. M. Fryer, railhead officer, and Captain H. L. Kyle, rail transportation officer at Sorey. Both of these officers were always ready to help the 21st in any way. Captain Kyle acted as liaison officer, smoothing our path with the French railroad authorities, prevailing upon them to occasionally move a freight car over into our yards and keeping us posted as to what was on the road for us.

The supply department has always been rather busy endeavoring to dispose of the articles that they have "picked up" in their wanderings, and at the time of this writing the storehouse is practically empty with the exception of two days' emergency rations and a very small amount of clothing, and we hope that in a very few days that we will dispose of all of this material and have nothing to do but stick our hands in our pockets and go home.

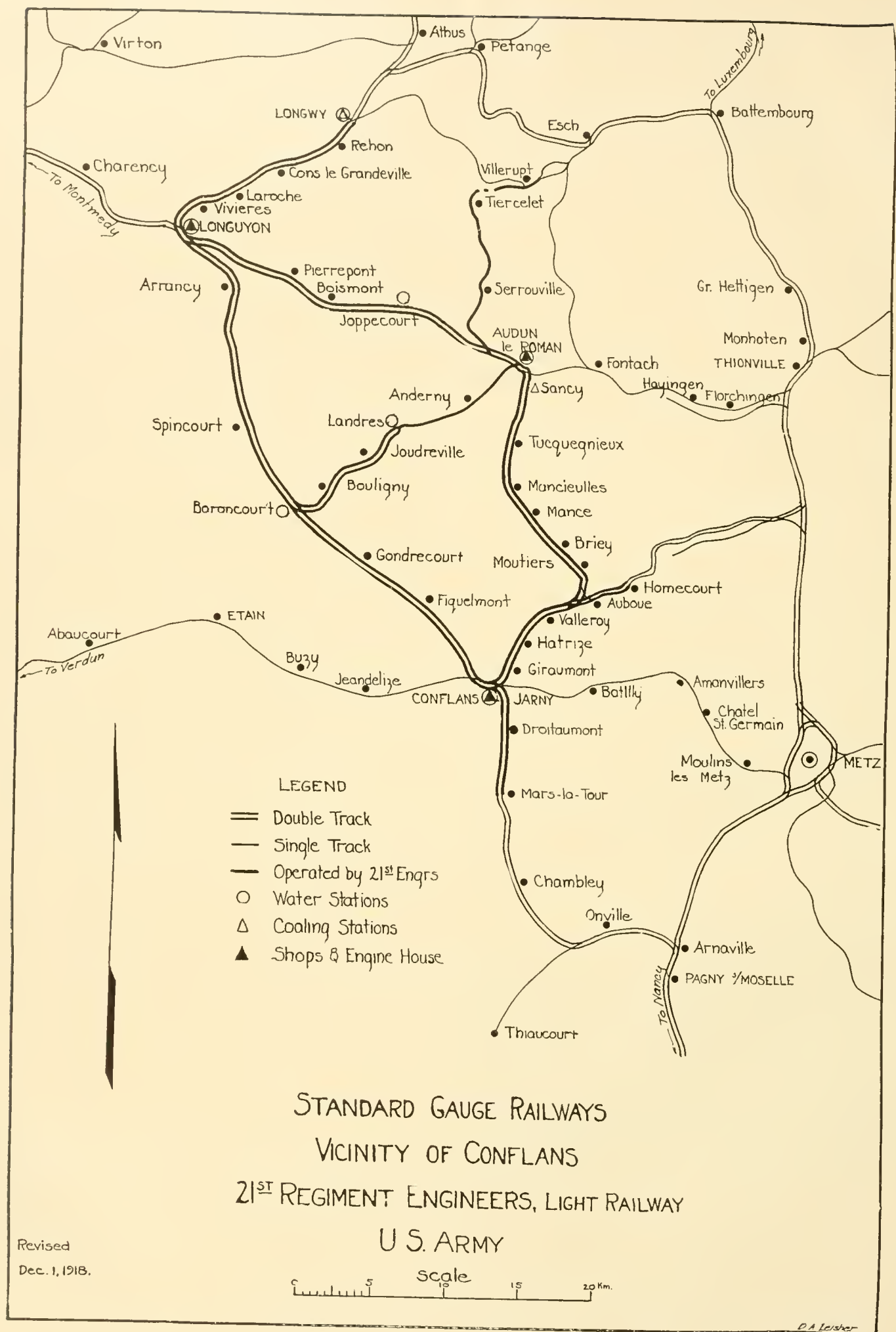
## Standard Gauge Operation

By C. S. Eliot

A new phase of railroad operation in France was experienced when the 21st was attached to the Transportation Corps for duty. The lines selected for operation were those of the Chemin de Fer de l'Est, extending from Conflans, through the Briey iron district, to Audun-le-Roman and Longuyon; from Conflans to Longuyon via Baroncourt, and the branch, Baroncourt to Audun-le-Roman and Villerupt near the Luxemburg-Lorraine borders, a total main line mileage of 110 kilometers double track and twenty kilometers single track. These lines had been operated by the Germans since the beginning of the

war and were abandoned only after the signing of the armistice. When the 21st arrived at Conflans, about November 25th, it was found a great deal of work was necessary to put the railroad in condition for operation. The round house and shops at Conflans had been struck by shells and debris lay in great heaps on the floor.

Of the thirty-two stalls in the round house all but three or four were filled with wreckage and rubbish, and of the six tracks leading into the round house and machine shop, only three or four were in a condition to be used. In the yard, the lead tracks and switches were blown out





and station buildings and right-of-way littered with refuse.

The terminals at Longuyon, Longwy and Audun were in much the same condition, round houses and machine shops in a state of chaos, tools and belting missing, machinery badly damaged, interlockers and signals everywhere disconnected or otherwise damaged.



*Passenger Station, Conflans*

As soon as switches could be repaired and engine facilities provided, train operation was commenced, the traffic first consisting in moving out refugees and prisoners released by the Germans.

The railroad from Verdun to Conflans was repaired by elements of the Third Battalion, 21st Engineers, the 15th Engineers and other troops about this time, as was the line from Nancy by the French railroad forces, and immediately the delivery of American power and equipment was commenced.

By December 10th the Army of Occupation was moving into the Rhine Valley and the lines operated by the 21st became a division in the now greatly lengthened line of communications. In the meantime, an operating force had been organized with a general superintendent, division superintendent, train masters, train crews, dispatching and station forces, a maintenance of way department, engineer M. of W., division engineers, signal inspectors, supervisors, foremen, etc., a mechanical department with superintendent motive power, master mechanics, foremen, inspectors and engine house men.

The rehabilitation of the lines continued and gradually the yards were cleared of the accumulation of German loads. Ammunition was unloaded at the various dumps and miscellaneous material, such as rails, I-beams, machinery and lumber unloaded at Quartermaster supply dumps. Such German equipment on hand as was accepted by the Allied Commission was delivered to connecting lines at Conflans, and that rejected was moved back into Germany by German crews. On January 28th, the lines operated by the 21st were organized into the 24th Grand Division, Transportation Corps, under jurisdiction of a general superintendent, reporting to a general manager, located at Commercy.

At Conflans interchange was maintained by the 21st with the 13th Engineers operating the line from Verdun, the French operating Nancy to Conflans and the Germans operating Metz to Conflans (joint track Battilly to Conflans), and Hagondage to Conflans (joint track, Block Orne to Conflans). At Longuyon, interchange was made with the French, operating the lines to Longwy and to a

point beyond Montmedy. At Audun, interchange was made with the Germans, who, according to the terms of the armistice, handled the American trains from Audun to Coblenz. Owing to interchange and joint track operation with German crews, pilots and interpreters had to be provided. Investigation disclosed a sufficient number of German speaking men in the regiment for the purpose.

Traffic on the Longuyon line to a great extent was that of supplies for the Italian and French Armies in Belgium and Germany. A daily passenger train and French and Italian "permissionaire" trains were also handled on a regular schedule. The special train of the King of Italy, likewise, made a trip or two over this line, en route to Belgium. While the Audun line ran through the heart of the Briey iron fields, industry was yet paralyzed, and except for a few coal trains and local supply trains, practically no business was handled except Third Army supplies. Traffic southbound consisted principally in movement of empties, many of which were a portion of the 150,000 cars which were to be surrendered by Germany to the allies. These cars were marked with a broad white stripe across one corner together with the number of the sub-commission making the acceptance. A large number of engines were also surrendered to the allies here, some of which were moved into Belgium via Longuyon. There was no passenger service on the Briey line except for a German passenger train operating over the joint track from Block Orne to Conflans. One passenger train each way also operated from Metz to Conflans via Battilly.

While it appeared that the paralyzation of industry in the Briey district was due to the removal of machinery by the Germans to some extent, the lack of labor seemed to be the principal difficulty. Whatever the reason might have been, practically no operation of the mines was evident, and activities were confined to keeping water pumped out of the mines. Such civilian population as remained in the recently evacuated area was rationed by commissions located at Conflans, Briey, Longuyon and certain other points and distributed from there to the surrounding villages. Gradu-



*East Tower, Conflans*

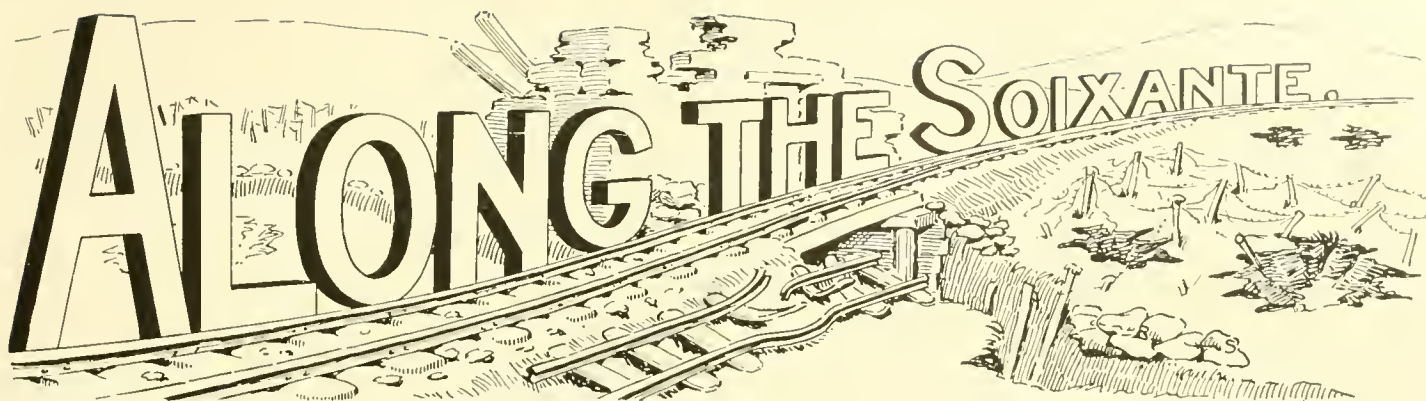
ally throughout the area the conditions continued to improve, the civilians flocked into the towns in greater numbers every week, and when the Chemin de Fer de l'Est operating forces took over the lines late in February, commercial business was beginning to resume somewhat of a normal aspect.



**HURRY** with that story-We are  
going to press. Forms close Mar. 8.







## The Orphan Regiment

It's a name I'm kinder proud of  
Yet sometime I often think  
That the man who got it started  
Put the Regiment on the blink.  
It was nice to hear ladies  
Pull a sentimental sigh  
For poor Light Railroad Orphans  
Who were out to do or die.

At Camp Grant the City papers  
Put up some lovely mush,  
How the boys from all the railroads  
Had been recruited in a rush.  
How Firemen and Hogheads  
Brakemen and Conductors, too,  
Were going to work in Harmony,  
A wonderous thing to do.

And the girls would come and loiter  
Where they could best be seen  
When we all had mumps and measles  
And stuck in quarantine.  
But at last we all got started  
And crossed the Briny Deep,  
Of Course we missed the subs  
And also missed our sleep.

So we landed at Brest  
Instead of St. Nazaire,  
The 'subs' had shot things up around,  
As soon as we got there.  
But later at Nevers  
We had a breathing spell,  
They started us at work and drill,  
Which both at once is hell.

Then one day we got to Sorcy,  
And at the Front we were at last,  
All our wonderings were ended,  
Our rooky days were passed.  
And the Hogheads and Conductors  
In harmony did dwell.  
Tamping ties and digging ditches,  
And cussing pretty well.

But soon like all orphans,  
Brought in this land of woe.  
We learned right young to help our-  
selves  
Wherever we should go.  
The Army needed lots of things,  
The Railroad needed more.  
They stuck us in there all alone  
To shout till we were sore.

What the Army needed  
The Army always got,  
The railroads somehow seemed to  
grow.

The orphans knew a lot.  
Every Regiment and Battalion  
In the sector and without  
Would come to us when they were  
short,  
We never were without.

How we got it was a mystery  
Those days we were at war,  
It was then not, how you got it,  
Get it quick and get some more.  
Get the work done in a hurry,  
Help others if you can.  
Well, we had it and they got it,  
And we helped them all to a man.

When the rush was at its thickest  
There was no idle jeers  
At camouflaging methods  
Of the Railroad Engineers.  
It was "They are the boys to help us,  
And they give us what they've got,  
And it's willingly they give it  
Without the red tape rot."

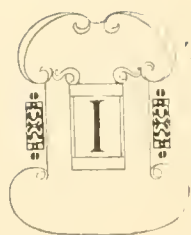
Well, boys, we were just orphans,  
When we left the place behind  
And started for the Meuse-Argonne  
Where things were not so kind.  
And when the war was over,  
We got our usual luck  
Someone slipped us standard gauge  
And passed the usual buck.

Then we had our greatest sorrow,  
Colonel Slifer went West.  
And we lost our grand old leader  
The one who loved us best.  
Well, we've had our joys and sorrows,  
And took all kinds of luck,  
Some have liked us, some have hated,  
Others have merely passed the buck.

And now the thing's all over.  
I'm not raising lots of cheers.  
For soon I'll lose some damn good pals  
Amongst the Engineers.  
I like the Orphan Regiment.  
But I am here to tell,  
Who got the name first started  
He surely did raise hell.

# Story of the President Grant

Lieutenant A. C. Spurr's Diary



IT WAS nearly six before we crowded into the two trains and set out for Hoboken. It was ten when we stood within the Hamburg-American line docks, but we were soon told to go on board and stay there. Our cabins were cozy, if not commodious. Lunch was welcome and well served and

soon the order came to stay off the decks and we were swinging away from the pier and down the harbor on our way over. Our ship, the U. S. S. President Grant, had borne the same name in the Hamburg-American service. Not a speedy craft, she displaced 18,000 tons and accommodated some 5,000 men on this particular trip. The 21st, the 30th Engineers, and the 303rd Stevedore Regiment, the latter a negro regiment of the Ordnance Department.

We went down the harbor about 4 p. m. with lights out and every one below. As many of the fellows had never seen the harbor, it was rather a hardship not to be able to watch the sights, but I saw the old girl through a port hole and some of the familiar sights down about St. George. When dusk had changed to darkness, we were hovering about Sandy Hook and Scotland Light waiting for our convoy, the Pastoria of the United Fruit White Fleet and the old cruiser Rochester, formerly the New York. And when dawn hit us we were on the deep and briny and getting our sea legs.

The primary difficulties were the mess and the guard. There were so many men to feed, some five thousand in all, and the messing space so limited that there had to be two or three different hours for feeding and special guard regulations to see that the men did not repeat. Two meals a day were all they were served, as it was simply adding fodder to the fishes. And then, too, it was not physically possible to get the requisite amount of exercise and so we sometimes went hungry, particularly when the system was first imposed. A system of traffic cops was necessary to keep the men moving in the right direction and to prevent repeating.

Those first few nights of safety were great in their beauty and charm, but lacked the necessary girl on the arm to make them real and reel, but we did our best by love songs and carols to make them go. They sure went when they put in the rule of lights out at 4.30 each night and none till after sun-up, which made the art of dressing one of ingenuity. That was easily avoided, however, as I was soon put on guard duty in the hold from 8 p. m. to 4 a. m. Sullivan and Spitteck were my guards and furnished many a good laugh and jest. The duty of the guard was to preserve order and keep the place clean and assist in the abandon ship drill. The second day out found us studying the pretty art of abandoning the ship

in the most approved manner. Each man was assigned to a boat or raft, according to station in the army and on the ship. Seven officers and a navy crew to each boat and twenty-eight enlisted men and fifteen men and one officer to each raft. As time goes on, this ship becomes more abandoned. This is true in many ways for each night found the devotees of chance at the festive boards issuing I. O. U.'s or receiving them as the luck shifted. At a given signal all are supposed to rush quietly and keeping to the right to the station assigned. From my post in the hold it was a long grind through the niggers to get back to my abandon ship station at post 13 and boat 13. I think that lucky as some of the fellows got rafts. This abandon ship drill is one of the most dependable feasts on board this ship. I have never before sailed with so much abandon, but I hope that there will not be the necessity to make the drills in earnest.

The practice of turning out the lights at 4.30 p. m. was a precaution against the wily Hun. This is supposed to take place at sundown and turned on again at sunup. The only light is a faint blue like the photographers use, but not quite so intense. It gives the appearance of twilight and makes you grope your way around. You feel for the various landmarks on the boat and just as you are feeling good some sentry yells "Halt!" in that irritating manner it seems possible to acquire only on shipboard. It is very disconcerting, to say the least, to have to halt, explain who you are and why you are where you are and then start feeling your way along again like you were playing a grown-up game of blind man's buff and many a buffet I have had particularly when I ran against a door suddenly thrown open. I tried to stop it with my forehead, without any visible good being accomplished.

This was my pet grievance against going on guard down in the hold every night as it took me so long to get there. Down in the dim dark of the hold, however, things went better, as there was always a song or a good talk with Sullivan, whose rambling days had given him a store of experiences well worth hearing and an opinion of value. There was a string quartette which I took particular joy in discovering and later introduced to the select society of the mess hall at an occasion to be mentioned later.

One day, just when I had helped myself to the corned beef and beans, there came an abandon ship alarm and the news soon flashed that this time it was the real thing, so for an hour we stood beside the guns and the boats to sight any subs. There was a cry, "There it comes," and all eyes were leveled at the finger indicating the spot and the gun trained rapidly on it. It was a breathless moment. Breathing was suspended, the stirring about ceased, the silly chit-chat was stilled and all eyes riveted on the spot.



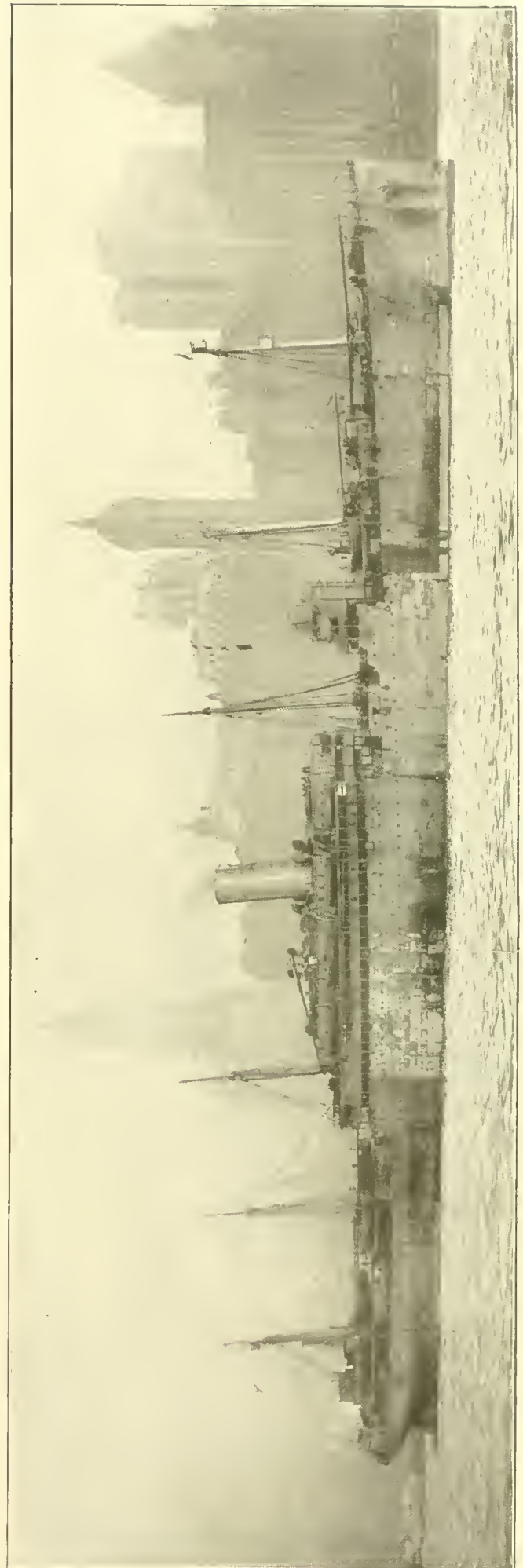
Up came the black object and then a spout of water and with relief we heard it was only a porpoise, or rather a school of them. The No. 2 gun, however, was completely fooled and fired and the result was it ruined completely the appetite of at least one porpoise, not to say the porpoise itself.

About this time it was decided very quickly to stage a series of vaudeville shows in the various eating compartments on the boat. Captains Mansfield and Sheedy were in charge, but I somehow got caught in it and before I realized it, was composing more verses for the Army Engineer and next was assigned as musician for an impromptu quartette that was to sing to them. There were fourteen numbers on the bill for the officers' mess.

Lieutenant Gregg opened the bill with a baritone solo something about "Sailor, Beware!" that would have been much better had the accompanist known the music he was going to play or known he was going to play the music.

A badger fight had been staged and Captain Sheedy announced that some difficulty had been experienced in getting the owner of the dog to allow the animal to fight, which caused some dismay, but shortly the owner appeared with the dog, a deep-chested, strong-tucked brute and at once a few more bets were placed on the dog. Then the badger was brought in in a barrel, Sergeant Miller and a nigger, stripped to the waist, carrying it in and setting it down with great care. A claw was soon appearing through a hole in the side of the barrel. Captain Nash in examining the fixings of the side of the barrel, apparently got too close and stepped back, his hand wrapped in a towel, through which blood appeared shortly. And then arose a dispute as to whom should be given the task of pulling the badger, it being ascertained by Captain Banks that as the success of the badger depended upon the way it was pulled, no one having any money up could pull him. To which Captain Nash entered a vehement protest, until things began to get unusually warm and Major Ryan counselled less vehemence. Finally, Captain Banks asked Major Wineberg, an officer of the 30th Engineers, to pull the badger. He accepted with some nervousness for the claw and the blood on Captain Nash's hand had given him a rather sanguinary idea of the coming fight. He was told he must stand in the ring, which he did with evident reluctance, but finally did, and awaited with an ill concealed agitation till Captain Banks should give the word. That worthy, however, had many little things to be looked into before giving the word, but as all things must come to an end, so did the suspense, and at the signal the Major pulled and the owner of the dog released his charge, who leaped forward to meet the foe, which proved, however, to be a pot full of meat. Oh, such a shout, such a laugh, and such a chagrined bunch of navy and 30th men. Then they opened up the top of the barrel and brought out Company F's pet coon, which had furnished the claw apparent through the side of the barrel. Captain Nash admitted having some difficulty getting the red ink to show through, as Captain Mansfield very carelessly left a bath towel rather than a hand towel as camouflage.

This ended one of the interesting evenings aboard the boat, and, notwithstanding our relief on arriving in harbor, it was rather with regret that we said good-bye to the old President Grant.



U. S. S. President Grant



## Hoo?

Garcia Ingells, Corp. Ord.

Yes, hoo? I'm asking you, hoo? Hoo are the Twenty-first? What'd they do and where'd they come from; where'd they do it and what makes them so popular? All you bucks stand close and I'll tell you. Take your hands



Colonel Peck, Commandant Ramspacher, French Major in Charge (Inspector) 60 cm. R. R. of the Headquarters French Army

out of your pistol pockets, button up your lips, get that fishy look out of your eyes and the grape vine out of your legs. Hold that egg head erect and swing forward those

long ears of yours and listen to me. Snap it up and drape those tails in line. That's it now—Hoos all enlisted men, hoo didn't have to be roped and tied, tarred and feathered, strangled, doped, handcuffed and dragged over to France? Hoo was amongst the first over, and didn't hesitate, wait, tarry, saunter, meander or lose time in getting to the front? The Twenty-first, of course, including me and the rest of us. Hoo drank all the vin rooze in France and had the Frogs worried to death? Hoo had the French girls, nurses and otherwise waiting outside the guard every night? I'm asking you, hoo? Hoo did the nurses want? Why, the men, certainly. Hoo did they get? Why the officers. There you are. Hoo had more fun with the French people than a monkey could on a thousand yards of grape vine? Why the Twenty-first. Again I repeat the Twenty-first. Hoo built and operated more light railway than any blasted, blighted, bloomey, bloody limey outfit or any frog hoppin', slow lovin', sky-colored, wine soakin', overcharging French outfit? Hoo? Why the Twenty-first. Hoo didn't care whether Fritz shot over shells as wide as they were long and didn't care no more about a barrage than a man does about fussing his neighbor's wife? Again, men, I am forced to say the Twenty-first. Hoo kept the Chief of Engineers office busy writing commendations and congratulations on good work accomplished? Hoo brought a smile on the stern face of old John J. Pershing and a look of fear on that kraut-absorbing face of Fritz. It is needless to answer. Now, my bucks, less we forget, hoo could raise more hell in a minute than Billy Sunday could undo in a month? Hoo always left the billets in clean condition so the French could move in the next week and put in a complaint for stolen property? Why, us, me and you, the Twenty-first. And why do I say hoo instead of "Who." Yes, you're so wise, now why? Sure the owl is a wise bird. Hoo knows what the owl says? Yes, hoo? Anyway it's a wise bird that sticks up for the Twenty-first, no matter hoo it is.

## Company A at Gerard Sas

Sergeant Al. Hanson

The night was dark, yes, some dark; in fact, one could hardly see his way around the camp at Gerard Sas, with its over complement of mud and insufficient duck board walks. The camp was new to Company A and while the best possible had been done in the first few days to put it in shape, it was hardly possible to walk from one barracks to another without swamping one's self. The day

had been spent in work, and gas drill, the utmost stress had been laid on the necessity of having gas masks handy at all times so that when the Klaxon whirled its angry warning every one would be able to put them on in nothing flat. Many, many times during the day the bugler had let loose his "Attention" with its consequent scurry to cover as a Boche plane flew overhead with its stuttering, never-



to-be-forgotten whirl of the motor and the early part of the evening had been filled with the Top's sibilant warnings, "Put out them cigarettes." The various duty sergeants had had a joyous time, demanding their understudies to put out all lights until the pilldropping stranger had passed out of hearing. The evening passed into the regular nightly barrage of the First Division lighting the woods with its continuous flashes, the intermittent star shells and the noise of the guns giving a feeling of awe and uncertainty to the newly arrived mud slingers of Company A. And then suddenly, "Ker-flam!" and the barracks shook as a Boche dropped a goose egg some distance from the camp. The breathing might have been a little louder but nobody left their bunks. "Ker-flam!" went the second one and the barracks rattled like peas in a pod. Some started to get up and the rest held their breath, but when the third pill dropped about a quarter of a mile away, with a noise such as those buddies had never heard before and almost throwing them from their bunks as the result of its explosion; well, 250 able buddies were fully dressed in less time, combined time, I mean, than it would take one woman to put on a simple dress for supper. However, no more pills dropped.

Every one was asleep or trying to when the Klaxon let out its long drawn out howl. Gas! Zowie! 250 men all asking for a match at the same time, all looking for candles and all trying to put on their masks in less time than nothing. Whir-r-r-r-r-r! One lad screams, "I'm going to die, I'm going to die, I can't find my mask!" and a sympathetic listener answers, "I guess you are, Buddie, but what are you going to do about it?" The Klaxon screamed on, the sergeants wandered aimlessly around giving the same kind of orders. The Top gave orders to fix bayonets which was sound advice as the camp was only five miles from the front, but then you can't tell how they

fight in Mexico. But then as some one said, "We were young soldiers, yes, awfully young, and while it is funny to look back upon, it was quite serious at the time." Orders were given to remain fully dressed till morning as we might have to go over the top at any time and every man had his shoes on when he fell asleep. "Them was the happy days."



*Typical of Region at Gerard Sas*

Mud, wet, cold, bum grub if you want to know it, no boots, plenty of hardships, but everybody was happy and the work kept them well. Those are the days that will be remembered. Remember the day we hunted spies? That was a dark night too and the 23rd helped a great deal when they shot up the signal light. Yea bo, those were hard days, we kicked like steers at anything and everything and cussed. But our first impression was the strongest; mighty few of us would give up those first weeks on the front for beaucoup francs. Those were the days that brought the boys together in a way that they never will forget. And friendship means something, Buddie. You're damn right it does.

## The Buck Private

The buck private is an odd curiosity in army circles. To the Non-Coms he is a valuable asset, at the same time a source of continual worry. To the officers he is merely a necessary evil. In his own estimation he is the re-incarnation of all the martyrs from the unfortunate who lit Nero's garden to the worthies of the age of John Russ. He employed most of the commissioned officers in civilian life, and enjoyed an income of no less than \$500.00 per month. To the Mess Sergeant he is nothing less than a combination of an ant-eater and a fidgety- particular hated guest.

Crap games hold a peculiar fascination for him. He often shoots his monthly income on one flop of the dice, while a swig of vin fonge makes him happier than a bridegroom and crazier than a bedbug in a steel trap. Payday finds him first in line, while details must always exercise draft powers.

At inspections the buttons on his coat suddenly absent themselves about the time the officer is passing the bunk next to him. If guns are being inspected, the damp weather produces rust spots while the piece is brought to port. All his fond hopes are often buried beneath the sawdust

of the wood pile, many promenades with the mademoiselle are realized only in the imagination, while the broom feebly responds to unwilling muscles.

The buck spurns all promotions and loaths the man that has ambitious aspirations in those directions, until opportunity knocks at his own door, then he takes an entirely different aspect. The Corporal and the buck are about as friendly as a dog and cat imprisoned in a barrel, the former is damned if he does and the latter is damned if he don't and they are usually damned.

Sympathy with him is found in profuse quantities, except in the case of the bugler, whom he would delight in boiling in oil. The mail orderly is always popular and the sick book is an ever present help in time of trouble. He is religious when working in the rain and philanthropic when eating a Red Cross free lunch (minus the schooner). Contented? Yes, because he has no responsibility and can't be busted; thereby having it on his superior brethren, Corporals and Sergeants, for:

Corporals may come and Sergeants may go,  
But the "Buck" goes on forever.





## As a Yankee Found It

Mechanic T. Johansen, Company B

A "billet" is it? The latest thing in quarters, I suppose. How do you get up there? Have you got the unadulterated nerve to call that a stairway? A nice place for some guy to come down head first I say. Why don't some of you feeble-minded birds turn on the light. Well, uncover a few windows then, even if we don't need the ventilation, as I see beaucoup holes in the roof. Now that's what I call cutting off your nose to spite your face. Just because they have a crazy law that taxes the houses according to the number of windows they just simply leave the windows out. Where do you see any hay? By golly, it is, ain't it. Oh, boy! Me for the hay tonight. It's many years since I curled up in a haymow. Huh? Well, what in h—l we going to use for our beds then, straw? I knew it. Somebody is always taking the joy out of life. Well, get out of my way and don't hog it all. You sleep next to me, don't you? Well, push your bed over so mine won't be all out in the aisle. Well, I can't help it. I didn't have anything to do with assigning so many to this hole. That tramp through the mud all day sure has made me tired. I'm going to turn in. And you children, if you can't find your bed we'll hire you a nurse. Well, what about it? Mine are wet, too, but I'm keeping them on to dry before morning. Now shut up.

\* \* \*

Huh—what time is she? No compree. What the Sam Hill! What are you birds doing round here in the middle of the night. Cheval? Horse? Where's your horse? Down that hole? This is an ungodly time to be feeding your horse. Now there's your army life for you. Here am I up in this hole and rain dripping right down on the bed and this horse is quartered downstairs as one of

the family you might say, and gotta be fed. Sherman never knew how right he was. Bon sewer, Madame, Bon sewer, Monsieur. O, yes, I'll see you again in the morning.

\* \* \*

Get off my face, you big stiff! or I'll knock you for a row. Well, why don't you look where you're going. Hey! Keep away from there. There's a hole in that corner. Well, I warned you. Now find your own way out. Say, them guns shake the whole building, don't they. I bet there's something doing up there tonight. Oh, you'll get used to it after while.

\* \* \*

Did any of you guys hear the churchbell ringing last night? I wonder what that was for. It woke me a couple of time, and the guns, any of you hear them guns? And say, who was that boob that stepped on my face? Well, laugh you poor nuts, it was no joke to me. Good night! There's the mess call. I'd better be moving or I won't get any seconds.

\* \* \*

Now look at this crippled feller. He's a card. We call him Gasmask account of the noise he makes on that horn. He's the village herder and that's to let the people know when to let their stock out. See there comes a cow out of that front door now, and up there comes a couple of pigs. Oh, he's not particular about what he herds. And he's got them trained too. In the evening when he brings them back he begins up on that end of town and when he blows on the horn the doors begin to open and they know exactly where to turn in, a cow here, two goats there, or a pig some other place. And the old boy never misses a day either.



Bill, let's go into this store and see what we can buy. Ourfs, Madame? No? Any matches, er, almettes? No? Chocolat. Fromage, Biscuit, Nuts? Well what have you got. No compree, eh? Come on Bill, I guess she ain't got anything. Ah, here's a Cafe. Two bottles beer, Madam. Two, deux, see beer, bierre. Finish? Finish beer? Let's go Bill, I can't go any of that Vin Blink or Vin Rouge. I know another Gin Mill up the street. Beer, Madam. Finish? Well, Bill, let's go to a place I know. I bet we get some beer yet. Here we are. Bonjour, Mademoiselle. Two bottles bierre. Money? Sure here's money. See Bill, they haven't got it here but she's going out to get some for us. She'll get it too when we can't get a drop ourselves. Here she is back. What did I tell you. Leave it to the Frogs. Merci, Mademoiselle.

The tank house? That's the community laundry. All the women in town, young and old, go there to wash. They bring a board along to put in front of them so they won't get wet. Do you see the paddle? Well that's what they use instead of a wash board. They simply pound the dirt out. They get some great muscles swinging that paddle. Hate to have one of them swat me in the jaw. Edison wasted his time inventing a talking machine, didn't he? Listen to that chatter. Just like a bunch of magpies.

Well Bud, glad to have met you. Here's my joint, so I guess I'll say Bon Nuit. Why upstairs here. You see that rickety stairway? Well, that leads to the Palace. Of course there's a hay loft up there but that don't prevent us from living there does it? Why you see it's this way, that regular front door over there opens on a hallway that divides the lower floor into two parts. On one side lives the Madame and her husband, and on the other side is where the horses and cows and chickens are kept. There's a courtyard in the back and they pull all their wagons through the big gate. There's a wine cellar full of big vats underneath too, and this boy's also got a small distillery, all copper, but I guess he ain't using it this year. You said something, boy, and then appoint me chief sampler, eh? Oh boy! Well, so long, Buddy, see you again sometime.

Shades of Moses! Here comes the first wagon ever built. Why oh why, did I leave my kodak to home? I wonder why they always

hitch them up tandem. And two drivers! I suppose if there were three they would need three drivers. Oxen? That's a regular thing over here. Why, you see a long time ago horses were scarce and only rich people could afford them and so the poor people used oxen because if anything ever happened to them the meat could always be used for beef and the loss would not be so complete. I guess that is still the chief reason today.

Shut up. Listen a minute, can't you? There. I guess that's all. Oh, him. He's the Town Crier. He tells the people all the important news and whenever the council has some new instructions to give out. Ain't that a racket. Too bad he didn't learn to drum when he was young. He'll keep that up, too, until he's sure somebody is listening. See him watching that window. He knows where all the people live. I asked a guy who could speak French what it was once and it went something like this: "The price on Pomme de Terre in Commercey is saukant centime. The Government wants all those who have calves for sale to bring them to Rue Montparmasse next Saturday, dix heures. All civilians are warned to move from the Toul Sector within ten days, Amen." Sometimes it's about taxes or schools or meetings. I guess this time it has something to do with the liquor tax. See that woman who is so excited over there. Well, she runs a Gin Mill up the street. I guess it hits her alright. The whole world is wrong and she is right. Well, this will give the women a chance to declare a half holiday to talk it over.

Why it's Sunday, ain't it? No wonder the old church bells have been going so strong all morning; and, I saw the old Curé going up the street in his long dress this morning and never caught on. I never knew there were so many people in this burg before. Where do they all keep themselves during the week, and they look more like civilized humans when they are dressed up, don't they? Here comes a whole family now. No, I don't think that's the old man. I guess the old man's in the army some place. This young buck must be her fiancé. I suppose he's here on a permission. Ain't mother and the kids dressed up, though. It makes a nice homelike picture, don't it, to see them all going to church together like that. I think I'll go up to the "Y" and write a letter home. Want to go along?

## Behind the Hill at Cornieville

Those of us who lived in the town of Cornieville long considered ourselves secure from German shell fire, because of the high hill which lay between us and the enemy. According to the old French housewives who had remained in the town throughout the war, the Germans had, several years before, made an unsuccessful attempt to shell the town, but were frustrated by the height of the hill above the town. Since that time nothing had occurred to disturb the serenity of Cornieville life, and not much more thought was given to the war than if we had been billeted back in the depths of S. O. S. At length one day in late spring we were aroused to disagreeable possibilities which had not received previous consideration. A German airman had come across the line and hovering above our village had dropped a bomb literally out of a clear sky. It was three days later that our confidence in Cornieville was totally destroyed. It was Sunday morning, a few minutes after three o'clock A. M., we were awakened by the shrieking of a shell which struck the hillside with a thud. We listened and the drone of an aeroplane was heard overhead, our first thought was that he had dropped a bomb, but as shell after shell came shrieking into the town we realized with sinking hearts that the impossible had happened. The Germans could and actually were shelling Cornieville. Hurriedly we dressed and rushed out into the street. The hill behind us, near the top of which were the dugouts: resembled a replica of the charge of San Juan hill. Two doughboys left their pup tent on the hillside and climbed for the dugouts, but when about half way up the hill, a shell

struck a tree near by and shrapnel killed them both. Had they remained in their tent they would have gone through the bombardment unscratched. Another shell landed in the corner of a pup tent not far away while the occupants were still inside, but failed to explode, thus saving their lives. Finally the bombardment stopped and we went down to breakfast amid much discussion of the recent disturbance.

Inspection was called off and the company held in readiness to go out and fix any track that might have been blown out. We were put to work building a shell proof by filling sand bags and putting them with layers of narrow gauge sections, on top of a wine cellar. Just before noon the Germans opened up on us again, and this time their range was better. One shell hit the town major's house and several landed over on the other side of town. A mule skinner was trying to make a balky mule behave himself when a shell struck near by throwing a couple of mules into the surrounding trees and killing the balky one. The skinner was thrown some feet away by the concussion, but was uninjured. A. Y. M. C. A. secretary was standing at one end of town when a shell burst near by. He started down the street on the run and as he neared the other end a shell burst just ahead of him, so he immediately retraced his steps, still on the double. Luckily the bombardment ceased before he was wholly exhausted.

The company was under orders to go to Sorey the following day, but under the circumstances no time was lost and the move was made that afternoon. Thus ended our peaceful days in Cornieville.

## COMPANY B'S WRECKING CREW

The wrecking crew furnished by Company B was organized about the time the line from Sorey to Cornieville was completed and turned over to the Operating Department. It consisted of nine men with Sergeant Sheein as foreman. Three French artillery cars were equipped with necessary tools, blocks and tackle, etc., and stationed at Cornieville, this point being situated about the middle of the division. For a time there was not much to do and the men were used on maintenance.

However, as traffic grew heavier and wrecks more frequent, they were called out more and more in "wrecker service." One of the first jobs undertaken was upon the Broussey branch. The crew arrived on the scene of the wreck about 11:30 P. M., having until four o'clock only to clear the line, owing to the danger of enemy observation. A tractor and two cars were derailed. No difficulty was encountered in re-railing the two cars but the tractor lay across the track and caused much trouble. About two o'clock the Yankee batteries opened up with H. E. Before long the Germans returned the compliment, some of their shells falling in the field nearby. The wrecking crew worked between shots, with as much haste as darkness would permit. Just as day was breaking they were able to haul the tractor and cars under the cover of some camouflage.

On the night of August 9th, the crew was called up near Mandres. On this occasion a tractor and a car of rations for the doughboys in the lines was derailed. Everything went along nicely until, when trying to rerail the tractor, flames from the muffler attracted the watchful eye of the enemy. They first shot a number of star shells, but it is doubtful whether they located the wrecking party. However, they sent over a few shells in their general direction.

An infantry patrol passing by advised them to move, but after explaining to them that the car contained rations for their outfit, they changed their minds, and offered to help. The star shells afforded excellent light and before long the job was finished.

Shortly after this the crew was relieved by another company as all the men of B Company were needed to accomplish the amount of work allotted to them during the St. Mihiel offensive.

## THE TOWN MAJOR

*Lieutenant A. C. Spurr*

Once I was Town Major, somewhere there in France,  
And all my many talents, to display I had a chance.  
I had to parley vous with every French madame,  
Give Monsieurs cigarettes and greet them with salaams,  
Find billets for mules and men and officers galore,  
And tell the guy at Headquarters I'd take two thousand more.  
I had to move manure piles, I had to find latrines,  
I had to tell the mess sergeants where they could cook the beans.  
I had to clean the village streets, and massage the main road,  
I had to run a swell hotel, where thousands found abode;  
Give first class service with an open air cuisine,  
And keep the dad-gummed non-coms from the officers' latrine.  
I had to cure the patron where the Major had his throne,  
I had to tell the Signal Corps where to lace each telephone.  
I was Town Orderly, and Town Major, the dam town's one bell hop.  
I opened up the barrooms and told them when to stop.  
I had to tell one rooster that he shouldn't crow at dawn,  
I told the K. P.'s where the water should be drawn.  
I disposed of all the garbage, met the troops when they came in,  
Gave the swill to all the pigs in town, met kicks with a grin,  
Built bridges over swollen streams and dams to stop the flood,  
Put duckboards over every place to dry the gol darned mud.  
Not one complaint could occur, but I appeased the madames wrath,  
But, d—n this Major's job to h—l, I had to give each man a bath.

## 21st LIGHT RAILWAY ENGINEERS

*Private Lester Gustafson*

They crossed the pond  
In winter seventeen,  
Their faces set,  
Their souls serene.

Their reception  
At front in France,  
Was beaucoup mud  
And Gandy Dance.

Light railways,  
I'm allowed to tell,  
'Tis what they run  
Through shot and shell.

And Narrow Gauge  
Their specialty,  
And in a pinch  
The Infantry.

After surveyors and scouts,  
For intelligence dope,  
Came the little train,  
Through valley, o'er slope.

The mud was deep,  
The outlook blue;  
But the railway petite  
Was soon put through.

Ammunition, supplies,  
And Bully Beef galore,  
Big shells, little ones,  
And then some more.

Follow'n drives,  
And driving too,  
Shell fire? Ah, oui,  
And work beaucoup.

Shell holes, barbed wire,  
And all the rest,  
Used for roadbed,  
And stood the test.

"Jerry" sees train,  
Begins to shell,  
Train crew quit?  
They do.—like hell.

Detail, halt!  
And repair toot sweet,  
Gone again,  
Le Chemin-de-fer petite.

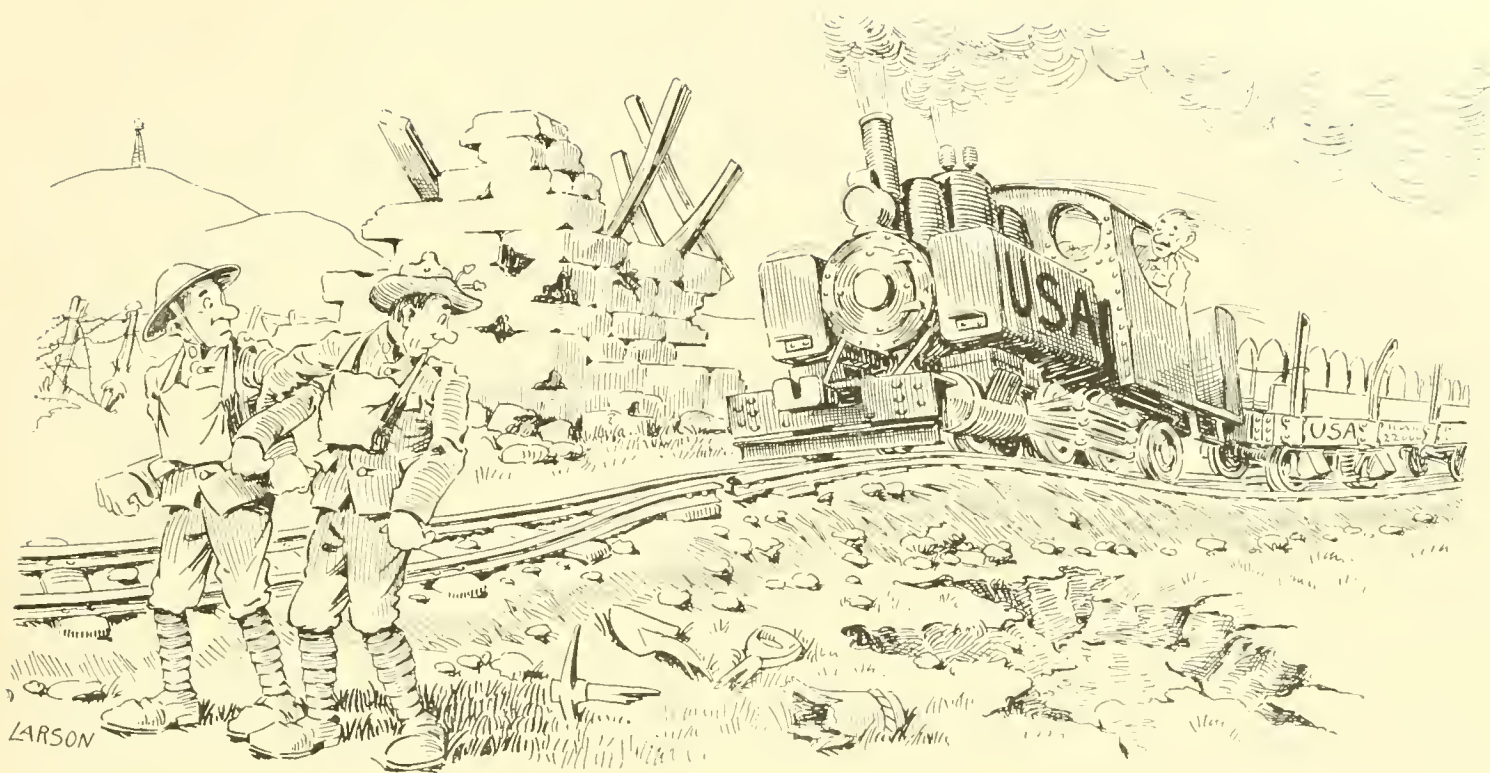
Fin la Guerre,  
And narrow gauge line,  
Doughboys left 'em,  
Gone to the Rhine.

Not to be left  
In the final grand rush,  
They grabbed a big railroad  
Left by the Boche.

Now they are pulling 90 cars,  
Never run late,  
Hommes 40,  
Chevaux 8.

The trains rumble by,  
And always on time,  
Scheduled by  
The new watch on the Rhine.





## War Time Railroading

1st Sergeant Van T. Sherman, Company D

When the 26th Division took over the Toul Sector for the second time, relieving the 42nd, we received orders at Sorcy to have 30 cars ready for a troop movement. At Trondes more were ordered. Being assigned engineer of the first train, I reported at the roundhouse about 6 P. M. It was a cloudless day, which turned into a bright moonlight night, and we tried to get out before Fritz flew over and spotted us. I coupled onto my train of ten U. S. A. gondolas, 33 doughboys in each car. I had a tank of poor coal, but a good fireman. The conductor got the clearance for the first block and we started. We had quite a battle for steam to Cornieville, so at that point we cleaned out the front end, punched out a few flues, knocked out a few clinkers, and then took a run for the hill. We made it all right, but I think the sky-rockets we knocked out of the stack attracted Fritz's aeroplanes, for he soon had the whole fleet of trains spotted, or knew the troop movement was on for he hovered over all night to get a shot at us. We did better for steam after fixing the fire at Cornieville and we proceeded to Boueq Est, where we were joined by the rest of the fleet making six trains, 60 cars and 1980 passengers.

At Menil-la-Tour we got a good tank of coal (Briquets) and started on an interesting trip. None of the crew had ever been over the line beyond this point. I asked for a pilot and was given a Master Engineer who was supposed to know the road, but I soon found that he didn't. He later got off to pilot the following trains. I got the name of the destination and one intermediate point on the line, however. Getting out of Menil-la-Tour was around one leg of a Y on a very sharp curve and grade. We made it and started down an alley and deep depression, so I stopped the train and sent the brakeman ahead. I found that we crossed the main street, full of military traffic and

a steep hill on the other side, so I waited a signal from the brakeman and let off the brake, and dropped over the main crossing as far as I dared with the whistle open, just barely missing a squad of poilus all vin rouge, and a French officer's automobile. I made the hill O. K. and went into a Yankee graveyard, doubled a hair pin curve and went on my perilous way into the darkness, for night had long since fallen and clouds were gathering in the sky, obscuring the moon.

I picked up Lieut. Helwig on the next hill, but found he didn't know the track any better than I did. I started down hills, not knowing whether I was on the main line or spur. Suppose I headed down a spur track into a cut of cars loaded with poison gas or 75's with 330 passengers behind me?

Eventually I stopped at a place where the railroad went two directions, I asked some French soldiers where Belleville was and they "connais pas," so I cut off my engine and ran down the left hand track three kilometers and found a French "Sous Officier" who knew the "intermediate point" I was looking for. I backed up, coupled into my train and started again. By this time the sky clouded completely, hiding the moon, and I found myself in utter darkness, running down steep hills, turning sharp curves, getting short on water, pulling 330 doughboys to this particular section of the trenches. I was *extremely* fortunate to keep on the track as not knowing or able to see where I was going, I often travelled faster than I knew and suddenly whipped around curves that I wouldn't have taken in daylight. Going through a thick piece of woods, I saw a small shanty close to the track by the light of a star shell thrown from the trenches a short distance to the left. I stopped the train, got off and found a French "Chef de Gare" eating a cold piece of "Pain" and sipping "Vin

Rouge" from the unfailing canteen. I desired to know where I could procure water for the engine. He told me I could get some at a stream in the woods two and a half kilometers beyond, for me to be careful as the Germans had been shelling the woods and that possibly the track was shot out. So I "*Merci* beaucoup" and beat



*American Narrow Gauge Locomotive*

it—short of water, black as a stack of black cats, and the track shot out—Wow! Reaching the water hole we siphoned a tank full, and was about to start again. I heard the hum of a Boche plane, so I laid low, and watched the long fringes of the searchlights, as they tried to locate him. Eventually they caught him from two directions at once, the lights of Nancy and Menil-la-Tour. He seemed to be right over us. Soon the anti-aircraft guns had him turning for home, shooting his machine guns in the direction of the light. He was gone.

We practically duplicated this trip for the same distance again to the next water hole, but, however, with more light, as the artillery on both sides were raising hell and the flare of the guns gave me a glimpse now and then of the hills ahead. I was thinking at this time I would never reach Belleville and of Napoleon's remarks about "an army marching on its belly" was overlooked. We reached a switchback, ran around our train, and got ready for the last lap. Lieut. Helwig now knew where we were and gave the following information: "Down a steep hill for one kilo, up a steep hill for one kilo, then level and parallel with a camouflaged screen for one-half kilometer, then a very sharp turn to the left, through a hole in a stone wall. Be very careful at this point for as the track curves sharply it also goes down a steep decline." He was sure right. I kept the speed down on the first kilo so well that I stalled on the next. Backed up, took a run for it and made it. Then I found the camouflaged screen, and nearly tipped over on the sharp curve when we ducked through the hole in the stone wall. We proceeded three or four kilometers in the dark and decided we were on the wrong track as we failed to find a certain landmark. We decided to back up, but changed our minds on account of the trains following. We eventually decided to proceed on into the blackness of the night and its uncertainties. Finally we reached Belleville, grabbed a few hours' rest and started back. This is typical of many trips we have been obliged to take.

#### AN AIR RAID ON TRONDES

*Private Charlie Meyers, Company D*

Trondes was an exceptionally busy place for an operator, having a large siding, a rock crusher, and one of the largest ammunition dumps in the St. Mihiel Sector

nearby. Standard gauge lines and sidings were also located here.

One night about 10.30 P. M., as I was busily engaged in getting the block for two ammunition and one gravel trains, I felt a jar that shook the shack like a leaf and a report that caused me to think the entire ammunition dump had blown up. Forgetting all about my pressing business, I ran out to see what the excitement was. The moon was shining brightly, but we could see nothing but the shafts of light from searchlights stretching into the heavens. I could plainly hear the hum of motors. Thinking discretion was the better part of valor, I started looking for shelter, just as another explosion took place. I soon found myself under the train. The explosion was similar to the foregoing one, but this time I could see the flame of the exploding bomb and could hear the whistling of steel and rocks. I was recalled to my duties by the incessant ringing of the telephone, and trembling like a leaf, crawled out and answered the phone, where I got a good bawling out from the Chief Dispatcher, who never minced matters and who said something about what he would do with operators who went to sleep on the job, thereby holding up the war. He also mentioned a pick and shovel or some other agricultural implements.

It seems the Boche had dropped his load of bombs, as no more explosions occurred. After finishing my immediate business and highballing the three trains out of town, I turned the phone over to the day operator, Albert Wehmeier, and went out to the scene of the excitement. The aeroplanes had made a direct hit on one of the residences, but luckily hit on the part which contained the hay. It was blazing right merrily, the village people gathered around chattering like a flock of geese. The family that had had the narrow escape and had lost half their residence, and also a lot of valuable hay, was the object of many condolences. As it was still burning brightly the "Commandant" feared that they would be the target for more raids that night or for the German long range guns, so he ordered all the inhabitants to leave for Foug, which they did, hastily taking with them their most valuable possessions, such as goats and camembert cheese.

The next morning the fire department from Nancy arrived on the scene and with a little chemical apparatus put the fire out which had almost exhausted itself anyway.

It seems that the Germans had dropped eight "G. I. Cans" which are almost as tall as a man. Five of these were "duds" which was lucky for us. Some American soldiers started unloading one just to see what it contained, but I had no curiosity in that line and so I, too, "partied" for Foug.

#### A HAIR-RAISING SMASH UP

*Private S. G. Johnson, Company D*

Previous to the St. Mihiel offensive traffic on the light railway and on the highways was very, very heavy. It was impossible to use lights on either the road or railroad and where we ran parallel it was difficult for us all.

One night I was called with my crew to leave Sorey at 10.30 P. M. Our train consisted of eight cars including two of gasoline. Our train was heavy and our engineer was making a run for the hill going into Neuf Etang. Just



before reaching the top of the hill the engineer (we had an engine crew from D Company, 12 Engineers) whistled brakes. We did the best we could but could tell from the force with which we struck that our best had been too little. Some trucks, both American and French, had been parked on our little railroad. There was a French truck lying on its side in the ditch along the road. I heard some one shouting as if in pain and ran to the truck where I found a Frenchman pinned underneath. The truck had started to burn, the two cars of gasoline in our train were opposite. There was little time to lose.

I caught the soldier by one of his legs and attempted to free him. I could not move him. I called to the other brakeman, F. Barry, for assistance. He shouted to "Get away from that truck, it's loaded with 75 ammunition and will blow up sure." I told him there was a man pinned and we couldn't leave him burn. He came and together we pulled with all our might. We were under the truck working like mad when the truck blew up.

The jar evidently lifted the weight from our comrade as we freed him. The gasoline fifteen feet away began exploding, shells were coming thick and fast from the cañon. As we were straightening to carry the wounded man, a very violent explosion threw us all on our faces.

Too dazed to realize what we were doing we scrambled out the best we could, dragging the French soldier with us.

I ran back to flag a following train which arrived in time to pull two cars of rations and a car of coal from the burning cars and trucks. The other brakeman and conductor Travis had taken our engine and pulled a badly scorched car of meat away.

When the fire from the three burned cañons and our four cars had died down we found the body of a French soldier burned to a crisp. He must have been sleeping in the truck and the blow stunned him in such a manner that he couldn't shout or help himself.

The fire and explosions caused considerable excitement among the men at Neuf Etang, many of whom thought the St. Paul ammunition dump had been blown up by the Germans in some way. Some took to dug-outs and Sgt. Cooley and Nate DeLong did marathons down the road clad only in Government B. V. D.'s and the necessary hobs.

### BOCHE BOMBS IN SORCY

Sorcy was bombed several times during the time of our activities there. Probably the first raid created the greatest excitement, since it was wholly unexpected. True, the Boche had been over the camp many times, doubtless taking pictures of the newly erected warehouses and railroad yards, but he had never, until then, attempted any interference with our operations. One clear day, however, when the sun was shining brightly some one discovered two Boche planes coming over in the direction of Sorcy. The anti-aircraft guns were using them for a target, but still they came and it was not until they were directly overhead that we saw three more planes doing all sorts of manoeuvring above and between the first two. Our supposition was that the last three planes were Americans, and that we were now going to see a real air battle, but, to our surprise, we found that they were three more Boche planes that had been flying so high that we had not been able to see them, and that they had come down lower and were doing those funny stunts to get into position to open their tail gates.

When the first bomb fell, it was not necessary to give the alarm. Everybody "partied toot sweet" in all directions. The bombs continued to fall very fast, likewise the

race for safety continued faster and faster in perfect cadence with the bursting bombs. At last, after what had seemed hours of suspense, having played havoc with the Frenchman's potato patch on the hillside, the enemy foiled, retired in discomfort to his lair beyond the lines.

In summing up our casualties we found one, a man evi-



*Sorcy, View of Shops and Warehouses from East*

dently desperately wounded lying in the doorway of D Company barracks. No wound was visible, nevertheless, he was assisted to the infirmary. Upon examination it was found that a piece of shrapnel had gone through his coat sleeve, but doing no damage otherwise. Thus ended experience number one.

### DISPATCH RIDING

*By the Late Private George T. Higgins, Company C*

During the St. Mihiel and Argonne drives I was acting as regimental dispatch courier. During the St. Mihiel drive I had a schedule of 128 miles per day and a running time of forty-five miles an hour. Motor Dispatch Service mail was delivered from General Headquarters to Sorcy, Meuse, and from there relayed to the front line trenches. I was also working in special courier service, I mean by special courier service P. D. Q. service, and this is very exacting work, especially at night, riding at breakneck speed without lights and on roads alive with traffic.

I remember one night leaving Sorcy with ten P. D. Q. telegrams for the Commanding General, 1st Army, at Souilly, Meuse, which was a trip of about fifty miles. I left Sorcy about 9 p. m. At that time the 1st Army was moving from St. Mihiel to the Argonne and traffic was very heavy. The night was very dark and rainy and it was almost impossible to see my hand before me, but the telegrams were important and had to be delivered.

Up the road I went at a rate of some thirty miles an hour, guiding my course more by the rumbling of the trucks moving slowly along the road than anything else. At Sampigny the French M. P. let me go by without stopping. Suddenly I noticed that I was on the St. Mihiel road and not far from the Boche trenches. I made a hurried about face and back to the Souilly road. Finally arriving at Souilly, I delivered my telegrams and started back to headquarters. My return trip was interrupted by Boche aviators who started bombing the road. The bombs were landing so close I had to lie down in the ditch for some time. A number of similar experiences fell to my lot during the two drives, but the worst feature was the riding at night in pitch darkness, hearing the trucks coming toward you and wondering if you would miss them. If you have not a steady nerve, don't be a dispatch rider.





## Night Air Raids

Private Harry B. Anderson, Company E

One of the most spectacular features of the war was the night raids of the German bombing planes. It was certainly a wonderful sight when dozens of huge searchlights cast their rays on the plane while the 105's, 75's and machine guns open fire upon it, and in return the enemy aviator shoots at the lights with his machine guns. Like a big moth in the lights, or perhaps like a big lightning bug as he shoots his tracer bullets toward the earth, and then he takes a notion and opens the tail gate and you think hell itself has broken loose as the bombs hit the earth. Fortunately they do not hit their mark very often.

While stationed at Menil-la-Tour, during the month of July, the Boche planes would come over almost every night at about nine or ten o'clock. It was an interesting sight, many of the men would leave the barracks and watch the show. The trench just outside of our barracks was a good place to view the performance from and at the same time afforded protection should a bomb fall close. An anti-aircraft battery of 75's located at Royaumeix would open up, give us the alarm and keep shooting as long as

the planes were in range. Fritz dropped many bombs at Menil-la-tour, but never did any damage. They were usually headed for Toul where they received a hearty reception from the many anti-aircraft guns which defended that city. These guns would send up a heavy barrage against the planes and would not allow them to get low enough to accomplish anything.

While we were located at Belleville, the bombers came over every night, headed for Pompey and Nancy and would often drop a few around Belleville so as not to slight Company E. The awful chilling hum of their motors, the rattle of machine guns, and the anti-aircraft guns would keep us on the alert until they had gone. There were plenty of dug-outs at Belleville and many of us made it a practice to stand close by one, even if we did not go in. However, when the bombs were dropping close, we lived up to "Safety First" principles.

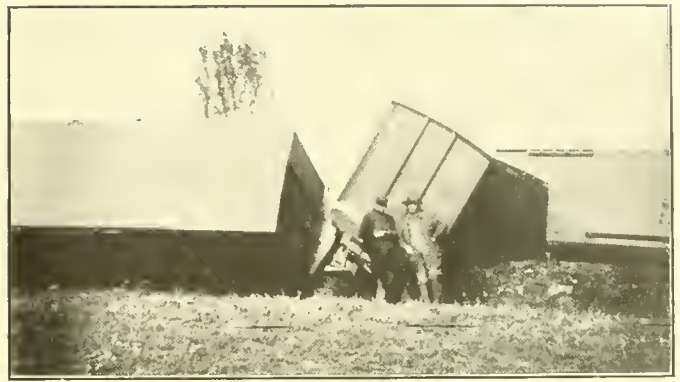
I remember one night, the report came out that the planes were dropping gas bombs. Everybody got their gas mask before going outside the barracks. After the



planes had passed by Matt discovered he was wearing a bandolier of extra shells, thinking it was his gas mask. At Cheppy when a bomb dropped right near our camp and threw rocks on our tents, everybody fell flat on the ground and Matt tried his best to get under the stove, which only stood about two inches high from the ground. George was the fastest dresser we had. When the Boche came over he could make it in four counts. It got on George's nerves so much one night that after he had got up three times in the night, he just stayed up all night.

About the worst place was at Cheppy, in the Argonne in October and November, 1918. The bombers used to just naturally pepper the country around Cheppy with bombs and there was not any anti-aircraft guns close by to combat them. Our steam engines shooting up sparks in the yards was a good target, and it is a wonder that they did not do a lot of damage, but fortunately they always missed their mark.

The night bombing plane was not a success as far as



*Derailement on the Narrow Gauge*

doing much real damage was concerned. It was used more to frighten the people. The anti-aircraft guns seldom brought a plane down, but they did keep the machines up so high that they could not do much. I am glad I have had the opportunity to see many night raids, but hope I will never witness another one.

## The Falling of the Boche Plane

Private Wm. Livingston, Company B

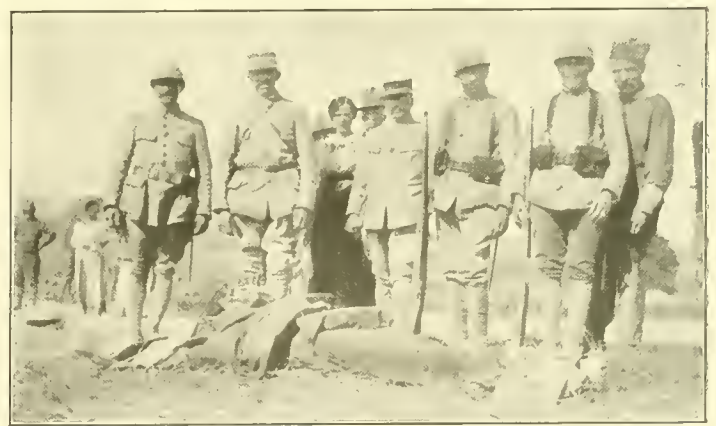
It was Sunday morning in our little camp at Sorey Gare and the heavy mist had just cleared out of the valley when some of our men heard the put-put-put of a machine gun overhead. They looked up just in time to see a plane doing the tail spin and another plane following him down.



*German Plane Shot Down Near Sorey Gare*

Most everyone was cleaning their guns and shoes preparatory to inspection, but they dropped everything and came out to see the fate of the aeroplane. The planes were flying at an altitude of about six thousand feet when they started to battle. The Frenchman got on top of the Boche and followed him down to about 4,000 feet. The Boche was doing a tail spin all the way down and it appeared as if he tried to straighten out his plane when his

wing broke into pieces and he descended like a shot to the ground. He fell about two hundred yards from our camp on a little knoll. Now all thoughts of inspection were forgotten. Up the road from the camp came everyone on the run, Sergeant Donnelly in the lead on his motorcycle and giving her all the juice she would stand. Next came a Frenchman with his horse and two wheeled carriage, with



*Dead German Aviator*

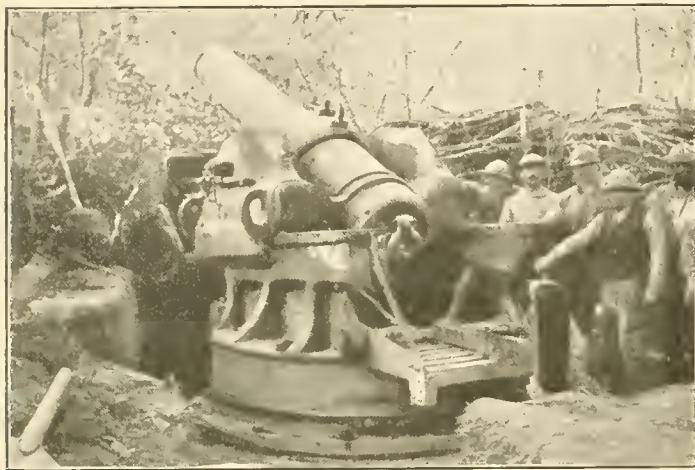
Americans hanging on anywhere they could get a toe hold, followed closely by men on foot, puffing and blowing, up over the bank and across the field to where lay the wreckage. Then the wild scramble for souvenirs: one got a helmet; another the nameplate from the machine, maps, everything was disappearing, even to the multicolored linen of which the wings were constructed, when the arrival of Colonel Peek and Major Ryan put a stop to these activities.

The plane was an observation machine which seated an observer and pilot. Both Germans were killed and the plane completely demolished. Upon examination it was found that the pilot had been wounded in the back. Both men were very roughly dressed, and wore medals which had been received for going on air raids over London. In the afternoon a French Captain and Lieutenant of Aviation came to look the wreckage over. From various remarks we

learned that they were the victors in the engagement we had witnessed. The men all felt pretty happy that day, knowing that there was one less plane to come over and disturb their slumbers, but mostly because there was no inspection that morning, as all the officers from the Colonel down to the Second Looeys had turned out for the chase. It was just as well for there was nobody in camp to be inspected.

## Handling Big Guns in the Bois de Hazelle

During the latter part of June men from Company E placed a large French marine piece in the Bois de Hazelle west of Fliry, near the Fliry-Beaumont road. The gun was mounted on an especially constructed car with the base on a separate platform. The job required three nights. The first, the gun and base, with their French personnel, were



*French Howitzer Ready for Action*

taken to the position, it being necessary to operate the train through gas with masks adjusted for about a mile. The gun and base had been delivered and the personnel, ammunition and equipment cars were about to be spotted when the project attack made by the 26th Division in connection with the 30th Engineers began. It was then 2 a. m. This "show" was the most violent affair staged in this sector till the commencement of the big drive. The crews were very close to the line, so close, in fact, that the machine gun bullets passed overhead, but, owing to the nature of the ground, the men were in comparative safety. The work completed about 4 a. m., the crews returned to find the track shot out at Bernecourt, between them and home. Fortunately an old switch-back into the town afforded another means of escape from a field that was looking too much like a "movie" of a battle to be pleasant.

Later in the morning, another detachment of E Company men went to repair the blown out track and were caught just north of Bernecourt by the Boche 77's. Lieutenant Butler was stunned by a high explosive shell, but, fortunately, was not injured, while Privates Heitzinger, Hertz, Wickwire and Davidson were all badly gassed.

Captain Mansfield arrived shortly afterward and assisted Lieutenant Butler in the repair work, which was finished quickly.

Two nights afterward two crews went into the wood to take out the empty cars which had taken in the ammunition and supplies. During the early part of the night, which was very dark with a drizzling rain, the men worked with pick and shovel repairing parts of the track. There was a slight wind in the direction of the enemy and, according to our infantry outposts, the noise of the repair work, the tractors and even our voices could be plainly heard by them and probably by the Boche.

At the most exposed point a six per cent. grade prevented hauling any more than two cars at a time. There were eight cars. Six had passed and the tractors had returned for the last two when a sweeping barrage passed over the ground around the train. The amusing part of the affair was that as the fire approached, the two conductors whose engines were facing in the opposite direction, began to argue as to which was the head end of the train when a shell fell very near and the argument was settled by mutual consent. Although the shells dropped around the train for twenty minutes, the crews brought their trains to the head of the grade, coupled up the eight cars and departed for Bernecourt. From there they returned to the gun position with two loads, passing the danger point twice again that night.

The third night was the taking out of the gun directly after it had finished business. The tractors arrived at



*French Howitzer on the Narrow Gauge*

Bernecourt at 9.30, but were held at the entrance of the woods by a systematic shelling from the Boche of the ground in the neighborhood of the gun.

During this shelling Captain Mansfield, who was in advance of the crews, was several times altogether too close to exploding shells. He reached the dugout near the gun



with difficulty. The vicinity was thick with gas and as a high explosive had torn away the screens, the dugout rapidly filled with gas. Captain Mansfield was seated on a high box beside a little nineteen-year-old French Lieutenant, who was in charge of the piece. When the gas seemed the thickest, the young officer, taking off his mask, got down off the box, shut his eyes, held his nose and snuffed the gas a little. Putting his mask on again, he climbed up beside the captain and said: "Ze gaz Boche; it is of ze qualitee very inferior!" What Captain Mansfield said cannot be recorded.

About eleven the shelling stopped, and the crews brought their tractors into the position. Great difficulty was then experienced in getting the gun up the grade by the danger point. Several attempts failed and the infantry

were getting wild because of the noise the tractors were making when some one suggested a rearrangement of the tractors and the getting of the forty Frenchmen of the gun crew to help push. Half way up the slope the French seemed to lag and the speed of the gun began to slow down. It was essential that the train should not stop, and one of the officers present, perhaps a little excited, seized a stick and, shaking it at the French, shouted: "Poussez! mes enfants, Poussez!" and a lot of other expressive things in English. These urgings gave results. The speed of the train increased and she passed over the top of the hump and left on her way to safety toward Bernecourt, leaving forty panting, but amused, Frenchmen to return to their rest in their dugout. Only one more easy trip was necessary and the job was done.

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## Over the Top at Fort Gironville

### THE MOTOR DEPARTMENT

By Sgt. E. L. Taylor

Last summer, when the motor detachment was hauling supplies for the French at Fort Gironville and Fort Liouville, we used to go "over the top" every night, on the road up over the hill from Boncourt, which was just across an open valley from the enemy lines.

No matter how dark the night, it seemed as though the moon came out just as we got in that open stretch. The trucks started out of Boncourt about two minutes apart, and they made so much noise that we imagined every Boche within ten miles could hear us. None of the trucks had mufflers and they sounded like a battery of machine guns. The Boche would try to locate the sound of the trucks with the aid of searchlights, but the French artillery would cut loose and it was good-bye searchlight. I believe, though, that the French artillery frightened us more than it did the Boche, as the guns were close to the road and it seemed like they were shooting straight into our faces. The Boche would return the fire and, although they often came perilously close, we never had a casualty during the three months' work.

A mechanic was carried on these trips and proved valuable on many occasions. One night a truck was having magneto trouble and stopped in the middle of the open stretch of road. We stopped and waited for Henry Dixon, our mechanic, who was in the last truck. We pulled to the side of the road and let the trucks go past. Soon Dixon came with his tool kit and started to work on the magneto, but it was too dark to accomplish anything. We did not dare to strike a light for the Boche were already dropping a few in our direction, neither did we care to stay where we were, so by removing my coat and placing a flashlight up the sleeve, I was able to let out a small ray of light through the opening of the sleeve and soon the necessary adjustments were made and we were on our way again.

Another evening while in Boncourt one of the boys was sitting in the seat reading a newspaper waiting for

darkness. When he finished reading he tucked the paper down behind the seat and forgot about it. Later, when he was going over the top to the fort, the paper slipped down on the exhaust pipe and caught fire, just as he reached the open stretch of road. It flared up and he stepped on the throttle and down the road he came, like a comet, but, to our surprise, the Boche never fired a shot.

If ever a bunch of Frenchmen worked fast it was during those nights when we were making as many trips as possible and they had to get us unloaded before daylight.

After unloading we returned by another road to the canal for another load, thus making the traffic all one way and avoiding collisions. One night Eddie Lloyd and Tom Connelly were unloaded first and instead of turning to the right at Liouville, towards Boncourt, they turned to the left and went through Gironville toward Broussey. They soon saw that they were on the wrong road and stopped at the first corner to look around or inquire. Eddie soon spied a sign post and climbed up and lit a match to read the sign. "Hey, what in the h—l are you doing?" yelled Tom. "Trying to read this d—n French sign," replied Eddie. "Come on out of here before you get us blowed up," retorted Tom, and b-r-r-r went his old Mack down the road with Eddie following a close second. They stopped at the next corner, and while Tom was trying to parlez vous with a French M. P., Eddie climbed another sign post and lit another match. The French M. P. let out a yell and flew for his dugout. "If you are going to commit suicide," yelled Tom, "do it alone!" and promptly made for his Mack. "Say, Tom, this sign says—" but Tom was already leaving and evidently Eddie didn't fancy a solitary death, for he took out after Tom as hard as he could go. They finally ran into an American M. P. at Broussey who turned them around and directed them to the right road.

# Lightless Nights at the Front

By Master Engineer Fagan, Motor Detachment

One night we were hauling the 15th Engineers from Commercy to Ansauville via the Deletoile road, which had just been completed by the 23rd Engineers, and had about a ten-foot ditch on each side. About 7.30 p. m., fifteen trucks left Commercy with Captain Hoyt in charge. We had four or five colored chauffeurs who had had very little



*Camouflaged French Heavy Artillery*

experience driving at night without lights. We made good time until we reached the fork near Neuf Etang, where the road enters a dense woods. A large amount of artillery was being moved over this road, causing an unusual congestion of traffic, and it was impossible to see more than ten feet ahead. The going was very slow, although at first the traffic was moving freely. Before we had traveled more than two kilometers it was jammed. A four-horse team had gone into the ditch and in attempting to get out had blocked the road. The wagon had fallen across the soixante, which ran beside the road, blocking that also. We pulled up to the jam and stopped. In order to avoid collision from the rear, each driver blew his whistle to let the man behind him know that he had stopped. Immediately the first two trucks halted, but the third, driven by a negro, was some distance behind. It came down the muddy, slippery road altogether too fast to make a short, quick stop. Whistles blew, men yelled, but by the time the truck was close enough for the driver to hear, he either thought he did not have time to stop or was too scared to try, for he screamed "Oh, Lord!" and jumped out. The truck ran off the road into the ditch and turned turtle. Luckily, it was loaded with rations instead of soldiers. A gasoline tractor appeared on the scene and in a very short time had set the truck on its four wheels and pulled it out of the ditch. We were soon on our way again, but only to be blocked a short distance ahead by trucks unloading ammunition. Fortune favored us during the remainder of our journey, but that was a night of many accidents. Within the space of twenty kilo-

meters there were over thirty trucks in the ditch. Our average speed was about three or four kilometers an hour, and we did not reach Ansauville until about five o'clock the next morning. After unloading, we returned to Sorcy, where we arrived about 10 a. m., took gas and oil and got some sleep, which was very precious and necessary, if night driving was to continue. We were still transporting troops by night to Auberge St. Pierre, Pont St. Vincent, St. Jean Canyon, Bernecourt, Ansauville and as far as Belleville when the St. Mihiel drive began.

On the afternoon of September 11th a train of six F. W. D. trucks loaded with colored troops left Sorcy for Pont St. Vincent, about thirty kilos southeast of Toul. It was raining, as usual, but we made good time and reached our destination about dark, unloaded the troops and tried to get something to eat, without success, so we began our return journey. Our orders were: "Go from Toul to Ansauville; there pick up a detachment of 15th Engineers, take them to Commercy and return to Sorcy." I have been with the truck trains on many dark nights, but this was the worst. And, oh, how it did rain! I was riding in the last truck and everything went well until about half way to Toul, when upon rounding a curve, we heard a shout up ahead, and brought our truck to a stop. I got down to investigate and found Corporal Bell's truck lying on its side in the ditch. It was so dark that he could not see the curve and had simply driven off the grade, which at that point was about five or six feet high. We drove our truck ahead, hooked a tow chain on the side of the body and pulled the overturned truck back upon its wheels. Hooking the chain on the front and after two or three trials, the truck was pulled back onto the road. The whole operation was performed in fifteen minutes, and we were soon on our way rejoicing. The joy was but short lived, for we had gone perhaps a mile further when Driver Aeuff duplicated the stunt with his truck and we had another little job on our hands. I will state that the language used there in the rain and darkness was enough to turn the air blue. However, the truck was soon back on the road and we arrived at Toul without further accident. In Toul there was the usual jam, and progress was slow all of the way to Menil-la-Tour, where we arrived about midnight, wet to the skin, tired and hungry. Parking our trucks alongside the road, we went down to the kitchen of Company F, where we were able to get food and good, hot coffee. This put new life in us and made us ready for anything. As we left the kitchen the town clock struck one, and up toward Ansauville a big gun flashed and roared. For about thirty seconds all was darkness, then on the right and left as far as eyes could see, the horizon was one mass of belching flame. We ran for our trucks and soon the boys were busy cranking. I went up to the head truck of which Corporal Bell was driver. He turned to me with the remark: "My God, engineer, it



looks like we're driving into hell." I said, "It sure does. Do you still want to lead the train?" and he said, "You're d—n right, I want to lead." I turned to the other drivers with "What do you say, boys?" and every man shouted "Let's go," and we headed for Ansauville. By this time the road was lighted with the flashes from the guns and the driving was much easier. The road passed the heavy batteries, which were working in the woods on both sides. The flash and roar was terrifying. Over on the German side we could see the shells exploding and on Mont See an ammunition dump on fire, upon which some Yankee gunner had made a lucky hit. We met the 15th Engineers' detachment about a mile out of Ansauville. It was too warm for them in the town and they were hiking it. After loading them on the trucks and in spite of considerable difficulty with a constant stream of trucks going both

ways, we succeeded in getting the trucks turned around and headed back for Menil-la-Tour. On the road two of the trucks got lost from the train and went around by way of Toul. They were held up several hours on account of a French ammunition truck blowing up and blocking the road, and did not return to Sorey until noon. The remainder of the train got through without mishap, and after delivering the engineers at Commercy, returned to Sorey about 7.00 a. m. We got our breakfast and gassed up the trucks and went to work again. Trucks were sent to Commercy to bring a company of the 11th Engineers over to Sorey, and the remainder were hauling material to the "Bull Pen" at Pagny. We finally got to bed about 8.00 p. m., a tired but happy bunch, for we had been in at the start of the St. Mihiel drive and knew that the Boche were on the run.

## A Day's Work on the Soixante

It was one day, about a week before the drive, a number of planes were in the sky quite a distance to the west patrolling the lines near St. Mihiel. In the east a German plane had come over our lines and braving the storm of anti-aircraft and machine gun fire, suddenly attacked and destroyed an observation balloon. The observers jumped from the burning balloon and, suspended by their parachutes, floated slowly to the ground, while the aviator, his mission accomplished, started for home, shooting at everything in sight as he flew. When he had gone we came out from behind our gas tractor, where shelter had been sought from his machine gun bullets, and started to work. We had a heavy cannon for St. Jean Canyon, which was finally taken to its destination without further incident save the several small derailments which are commonplace on trips of this kind. When we arrived a few "whiz bangs" were coming over, all high explosives, but none landing close to us. The French artillery lieutenant invited us to share his dugout, but Ed Wheeler, my pilot, said: "Keep your head and place the gun while I watch where the next one falls. If it falls short and to the right, we will have time enough then." Sure enough inside of thirty minutes we had the "Hun killer" in position and were on the way to Tremblecourt. At the latter place the operator gave us an order to go to Quatre Vents and pick up some personnel. On our arrival the supposed personnel was found to be big shells.

That did not bother me any, but we had one ear of something else. I do not know to this day what it was loaded with, but when climbing a very steep grade the gas engine threw some sparks and the man in charge of the stuff said: "Oh, Lord! I hope this won't last long!" The higher up the hill we went, the more sparks and an occasional blaze was omitted by the stack, and finally the poor simp got off and walked. Of course, that got my goat, and I went over to the "hoghead" and asked him if he thought there was any danger of those shells and burning that "other stuff. After I told him that the man in charge of the car got off when the sparks came back, he replied: "His nerves are weak, but we will wait for him at the top of the hill." We waited about ten minutes and loaded him on again, and went on to Tremblecourt, where we

delivered our train over to the F Company crew. After taking a cup of coffee and a "corn willie" sandwich, I walked back to the office and said to the operator: "What do you say now?" He replied: "Read this and weep or laugh if you want to." It was an order to go to Belleville. Tired and weary, we started for Belleville and, arriving there about 9.30 p. m., tied up for rest.

At 5.30 o'clock the call boy aroused the crew for duty. Ed was sick and did not get out. We made a trip to St. Jean Canyon with a small gun. When it had been taken up as far as we had ever been in daylight, a French captain met us and said: "You may set the gun off on the siding as it can not be spotted until after nightfall." For the remainder of the day we handled big shells, powder and other supplies.

About 7.30 p. m., we were back up at the siding and



*French Heavy Railway Artillery*

soon were started toward the front with the French and their baby cannon. Before we had gone very far a "whiz bang" struck a short distance ahead of us. Everybody beat it for the dugout, but for some reason no more shells came over, much to the mystification of the French, who were inclined to remain in the dugout in anticipation of a barrage. Finally we started on without them, but had gone only a short distance when they overtook us. The words of the captain, "This is far enough, we will take it from here" were pleasant music to our ears, and in less time than it takes to tell about it, we were headed back on our way toward home.

## FOLLOWING THE DRIVE WITH COLORED TROOPS

*By Sergeant Crane*

During the St. Mihiel drive the first platoon's work was to connect the French with the German steel through the St. Jean Canyon. While waiting for the big show to start, we were quartered above Manonville in Swiss barracks with a detachment from the 12th Engineers. We were doing odd jobs, mostly cutting out grades between Manonville and Minorville. It was here that we had our first experience with colored troops, a company from the 517th Service Battalion.

The drive started, as you all know, early the morning of September 12th. We expected to start out that morning, but no such luck. We hung around all that day and word came that we were to start at 7.00 p. m. on Wednesday the 13th, the colored boys to go with us. Three of us were sent on a truck to the camp of the colored troops to help carry some of their rations. We loaded up and were on our way back by 6.00 o'clock. The road was very congested and incidentally very muddy.

The road through St. Jean Canyon is not the best, as the canyon is lined with trees and heavy brush, together with countless grades. In plain language, it is tough navigating and darker than hell. We got along finely for the first hour and by that time it was very dark. We knew we were going, that's about all I can say, but how to get there was something we didn't know. We were bound for Pont de Metz and knew it was in the direction of the front line, but what road to take was mere guesswork. We kept on going. The truck wasn't hitting very good and our carburetor was flooding constantly, so we were using "beaucoupe" gas. The gas tanks we had were down in the bottom of the truck, so we had to unload and get at it. It was a difficult job. The mud was about six inches deep, and as I said before, the night was very dark, so you can imagine the tone of our conversation when the engine stalled or anything went wrong.

We came to a cross road after an hour and asked the M. P. there for the correct road to Pont de Metz. There were two roads, one level, the other a long grade, and at the time very congested, a string of ammunition trucks going up and artillery trains returning. The M. P. directed us to the congested road, instructing us to turn to the left a few kilos beyond. We were about two hours getting off that grade. Everything was tied up, trucks ran into us but we stuck on the grade. At last we got through and came up on a bit of high ground. The road seemed to run along the top of a hill. All during this time there were many of our guns in action and very few greetings from Fritz.

On our left was a long row of brush. All at once about five long range 155s let 'er rip. It about knocked us off the road. We got off the truck and went into the P. C. and were told we were on the wrong road, so we had to manoeuver a bit getting the truck turned around, getting down on the ground and feeling our way, for if we ever went into a ditch we would have been finished. We got it turned after some work and started back. On our way we ran into two trucks, but nothing serious happened.

We found the right road after a few hours' travel and ran into the colored boys, who were marching up. They were a wonderful lot. They had never heard a gun before and I'll wager there were very few who wouldn't have sold

his chances for a can of beans. They were very wide-eyed and the questions they asked would make any man throw up his hands.

We passed them and about three kilos ahead came into a very narrow and muddy road. Here the truck stalled. While working over it, willing to give our right eye for a drink, along came a battery of heavy French artillery long range 155s on rubber wheeled trucks, drawn by eight horses to the gun, and our truck stalled in the middle of the road. We hailed the "frogs." They stopped but were getting impatient. We were all getting a fine mud bath and had our truck about ready to partee, but the "frog" sergeant had orders of his own also, and was endeavoring to use his hands, having long exhausted his vocabulary, telling us how to get out. Well, they started out before we cranked our engine and the first gun carriage fouled our truck, pushing it to the side of the road with the wheels jammed. A few "frogs" and two of us got a goodly sprinkling of mud. It caused us another hour's work before we again got on our way. At last reaching Pont de Metz, we ran up to the light railway, thus ending a very wild ride.

It was about 6.00 o'clock in the morning then, so we started to find something to eat and, if possible, to sleep, but the men were sent back with the truck and given a gang of negroes. We started to build a grade, making good progress, but I will say the colored boys were willing, but very cautious and timid. They were willing to work, but as one of them expressed it: "Boss, I ain't no fire eater. I'se willin' to work like hell, but dese here bumbs jus' make me feel an awful long way from home. I'se got a big fambly." They were afraid to walk around, much less put a pick in the ground, for fear they would hit a mine. They got down to work in the afternoon and though tired they didn't kick.

On the second day we were about half way over "No Man's Land" when one of the boys came up to me saying, Boss, I'se don' got the best souvenir. Some potato masher. Gwine to send it home." He stated that he would take it to pieces, screwing off the end. I saw that it was a German hand grenade. I told him what it was and that if he screwed off the end of it it would blow him to splinters. He nearly turned white, dropped the grenade and ran.

We had quite an assortment, among them two or three preachers. One was a licensed clergyman. He used to keep them all working and I must say he was game. He would tell them they had religion, so keep faith and they would be all right. One of them said to him one day after a shell came over them and burst 300 yards away: "I may have religion, nigger, but I sure can run." And he did. I couldn't get him out of his hole for nearly an hour. Whenever they heard the slightest whistle they were on their stomachs and stayed there until I started to threaten them.

One day, about a week after the drive, I had about twenty-four of them salvaging steel from the old French trenches. I had unloaded a hand grenade and was playing with it. They were all working but kept their eyes on me. I pulled the pin from the grenade and threw it. I don't know how it happened, but I had no sooner let it go than over came a big one landing about 300 feet short of us. They all turned white, and I myself did not know what had broken loose. There was fully twelve inches of mud in the trench and they flopped into it. It was about 3 o'clock in the afternoon and a regiment of M. P.'s could not get



them out of it. Quite a number of shells came over and burst around us. Every time one landed they would say, "Oh, Lord, have mercy," but that's about all.

At that time we had a number of men working up ahead toward Thiaucourt, where it was hotter. Whenever one of them got lazy all I needed to say was, "Well, you go to the front tomorrow" and he would work.

One fellow, his name was Cleve Glover, was very timid, a little short and stout boy, one could not get him to part with his steel hat. I used to say: "Well, Cleve, you are going to the front tomorrow." He would get all flustered and say: "Boss, don't talk lik' that. You make me nervous. I don't lik' dese bomb shells. Why don't you talk about something nice." He was a deacon from a colored church, but was never cut out to be a shell dodger.

The preacher was a very slim, tall fellow. He had made a few trips to Vieville and told me about his experiences. Coming across a field one day several broke around him. "I thought my time had come, but I run as fast as I could and heah I am."

### TRACK LAYING IN "NO MAN'S LAND" COMPANY A

During the early days of September, while the first platoon was working in the Bois Chanot, we had repaired the soixante and made some important changes on bridges in anticipation of the St. Mihiel offensive. Immediately after the barrage started, which marked the opening of the drive, we left for the front on a train loaded with rail and other supplies for soixante construction. At the time we left camp for the front it was dark and a slight rain was falling, the roar of the guns echoing and resounding in the canyon through which we passed, made it seem as though the number of guns participating in the barrage was multiplied a hundred times. The sky was lit by flashes of fire from the continuous discharge of cannon, the whole forming a setting for a scene not easily forgotten. It was our intention to reach the end of the track and start following the drive, but a bad derailment at a point afterward called "Hard Luck Curve" necessitated our unloading and sleeping on the ground until daylight. At the break of dawn we arose and replaced several sections of bad track that could not be negotiated with American equipment. After a light breakfast we proceeded to what had been, the night before, the front line trenches, where the soixante ended.

At noon we saw a Boche aviator in an allied plane slip over the lines, bringing down in rapid succession three observation balloons. After destroying these balloons, he made a circle and came directly toward where we were lined up at our rolling kitchen for dinner. Swooping down toward the mess line, he opened up with his machine gun, but was frightened away by the appearance of allied planes before he could do any damage. Volley after volley was fired at the escaping Boche who, before he could reach his own lines, was brought down not more than a mile from the place where he had created so much havoc. After dinner we started laying steel across "No Man's Land." At about 1.00 o'clock the next morning, after having worked eighteen consecutive hours, an officer in charge of an ammunition train came to our lieutenant for assistance. The leading truck had broken through a bridge, thus blocking the road and preventing following trucks from passing. This train was transporting small arms ammunition for the doughboys, and it was urgently needed. Our lieutenant called for a small detail and with the light of

lanterns proceeded to clean up the damage. Evidently the light attracted the enemy's fire, for a number of gas shells came over, landing very close. One of the boys in the detail went to the truck train without his gas mask.



*Laying Track Across "No Man's Land"*

He had been so long in finding it that the sergeant told him to come on without one, and when the gas came over the sergeant took off his own mask and gave it to the man he had caused to be on the job without one.

On September 15th we connected the newly laid steel with the old German lines, thus giving a continuous line from Sorey to Thiaucourt. The German line needing repairs, it was not until September 19th that we started using this line for transportation of supplies and ammunition to the doughboys. On September 27th a detail of twenty men moved up to a canyon between Vieville and Thiaucourt, situated about one kilometer behind the American outposts. The place where they had originally intended to camp had to be abandoned because when they arrived there they found five men and eighteen mules that had been killed the night before. The Americans named this place "Shrapnel Valley" as it was full of American artillery, consequently it was being continually shelled. We set up our kitchen and the men dug in on the hillside. After dinner the shell fire became so heavy and the air so full of gas it was impossible for the men to continue their work, so it was decided that, under the circumstances, the men would be unable to obtain sufficient rest at night to carry on the work in the day time, so they moved back to camp, therefore, going to and from work on a train pulled by a gasoline tractor. One portion of this road, just after leaving Vieville, was on top of a hill exposed to the direct observation of the Huns, and we were shelled every time we crossed over this hill. We were glad to get the job finished. It was too warm for comfort. However, we found we were jumping from the frying pan into the fire when we moved to the Argonne—but that is another story.

### GETTING THE BOCHES' GOAT

It was one of those rainy days during the St. Mihiel offensive while a detachment of our company was working on blowouts on the narrow gauge. Our reserve rations were getting pretty low when one of our boys spotted a goat which was not speedy enough for the Germans in their retreat.

We then planned to trap it, and one of our "buddies," who had never done anything besides herd sheep in Austria, said that he would get the goat in a very short time. The

next thing we knew the Austrian was down on all fours with a bunch of grass in his mouth, a little bell around his neck, making a noise with his mouth which sounded like a steamboat, but he said it was the way they called goats in Austria.

It was not long before the goat was prancing around and wagging his tail as if he were pleased. The goat bounded forward and when he was in a few yards of the sheep herder he stopped and looked as if something was suspicious, but it was too late. The Austrian made one bound and was on top of him.

The goat then become wild and started off on a dead run with his opponent still on his back. When the goat had gone about a hundred yards and being excited, he leaped into a big shell hole which was full of water. Our boys, seeing the splash, ran to the rescue just in time to save the Austrian's life, as he was not much of a swimmer. We threw a rope to him and he grabbed it with one hand and still had the goat in the other.

We had no trouble in getting it dressed and as for a cook we had some lads that have done nothing else but cook in the "jungles." We had some feast, and until then never knew there was so many soldiers in the A. E. F. The doughboys even left the trenches to get a piece of the fresh meat. From that day on we never saw or heard any more of the kaiser's goat.

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## NIGHT WORK

*By Clarence P. Hobert, Company B*

Company B's first experience at night work was on the construction of the Broussey loop, one-half of the company being required for this work. It was necessary to build this line at night, owing to the close proximity of the front lines, which were about two kilometers north. The men were rather nervous the first night, but the tension wore off after a time. The second night found them hard boiled and many of them smoking.

Owing to the darkness, a white tapeline was placed along the center of the grade and each squad was assigned a certain number of feet. The third night the Boche sent over gas. However, this caused little confusion. The men dropped their tools, put on gas masks and walked to the train, arriving at their barracks in a short time. Gas was sent over again the fourth and fifth nights.

The grade was completed, steel connected and ballasted and the line was ready for operating the seventh night. The only shelling during this work was on the last night, when the American artillery sent shells over their head continually for an hour, but it seemed an age to some of the men. It is anything but a comfortable experience.

The second experience at night work came ten days prior to the St. Mihiel offensive. The entire company was stationed at Jouy. The streets of this village are very narrow, and heavy road traffic and steep grades made it difficult to run the steam locomotives through. There was also the possibility of the Boche shelling the streets, thereby tying up this important line. Therefore, a line was constructed around the town. The work required patience, as it was necessary to work in the rain, with mud ankle deep. The fifth night a German plane flew over and dropped a flare. It was very bright, lasting for several minutes. The men were ordered to get to the ditch and lie down. However, nothing transpired.

On the sixth night, a French truck loaded with gasoline

rammed into an ammunition train, causing an explosion, the flames lighting the skies for miles around. Many gas shells exploded and the men were obliged to wear gas masks and lie in a muddy ditch for some time.

At midnight the mule skinner would appear with his detail, hauling mess to the gang, which they ate while sitting on the mud-splattered ground. On the ninth night the track was completed and ready for operation.

At noon, September 11th, the company was ordered to pack and prepare to move. At 1.00 a. m., September 12th, they left Jouy just as the barrage opened signaling the opening of the St. Mihiel offensive. Hiding for five hours on the "Petite Chemin de Fer," between the front line and the artillery, the rain falling in torrents and the men were soaked to the skin, having little sleep, if any, as the roar of the barrage made sleep almost impossible to the most fatigued. It was a miserable experience, to say the least.

Early in the morning, as the infantry went over, Company B was unloaded at Ansaerville and hiked toward the front over a road which was occasionally shelled by the enemy. They dropped their packs and started to work, without interruption for fifty-six hours with no sleep and little food or water. The track ran across what was "No Man's Land" only a short time before. Trenches had to be filled and the dead dragged aside.

The line was connected, ballasted and in operation a few minutes after completion, when an ammunition train passed over toward the new front. The men then realized the value of their efforts and endurance as a decisive part in the general campaign.

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## HELPING SHELL THE HUN

*By Bartlett Schilling, Company D*

On the afternoon of September 25th a lieutenant from the headquarters staff of the 149th F. A. came to our commanding officer for assistance. Together they found one of the tractor crews and told them the 149th F. A. had only a hundred rounds of ammunition for each battery. It was impossible to get it to them in the caisson for twelve horses could handle only fifty rounds a trip. The roads were practically impassable from the dump at La March to the gun positions, due to the recent heavy rains, Jerry's evacuation and our advance. The light railway was the only available means of moving the ammunition to the guns, three miles distant. They needed 3,000 rounds for immediate use. A captain came riding up and asked the lieutenant what he was going to do for ammunition. The lieutenant explained the tractor was going to bring 3,000 rounds up as soon as the camions arrived. The captain was from the 151st F. A. and he surely exploded a bomb in the little party when he asked: "What in the hell are you going to do with 3,000 rounds and a six-hour barrage starting at 11.45 p. m.?"

The lieutenant started in surprise and told the crew, "I hadn't heard of this barrage, but it's up to you fellows. We will have to have it, even if the men have to carry the shells. I'll need 15,000 rounds more."

The 151st F. A. had to have 22,500 rounds, making a total of 40,500 rounds of 75 m. m. shells to be delivered when the camions arrived at 4 p. m.

The two tractors got hold of four Boche cars and two of our own and delivered the goods in record time, made two regiments of artillery happy and doubtless caused more or less discomfort within the enemy lines.



# Camouflage

By Captain James P. Nash

The one word that became universal during the world war that will live forever, its literal translation into English meaning: "To make something seem what it is not." Much camouflage was used by both the allies and the Germans.

One of the most striking examples of fooling the other



*Camouflaged Road and Narrow Gauge Railway.*

fellow in the war game came under my observation while we were stationed at Belleville, on the Moselle River, and just after the St. Mihiel offensive. The salient having been reduced and the line strengthened, much to the surprise and embarrassment of the Germans, and while they were still trying to recover and protect their new line to prevent the fall of Metz, the American Army had gone to the Argonne to begin an offensive scheduled for September 26, 1918, and left only a few troops in the Toul sector to hold the line and camouflage the enemy. As expressed by our brothers in arms, the English, we had his "wind up." He didn't know what to look for next, but had strong suspicions that his next entertainment would be staged by the French 8th Army, which was on the right of the American 1st Army and occupied the territory extending toward the Swiss border from the right bank of the Moselle River. Therefore, to cover the movements of our own army and keep him guessing, the comparative few left had to make noise and disturbance enough to lead him to believe that our side had been strengthened and were shifting for a new attack on the right. Company E, 21st Engineers, had played a very important role in the St. Mihiel show just closed and every man had done his turn. All were tired and needed rest, but on the 20th of September Major J. W. Viner, Acting Chief of Staff, came into camp and laid a plan before the company commander for handling a number of tanks by narrow gauge railroad to various points on the front to the right of the Moselle, and asked if we could do the job. Having utmost confidence in the company and the ability of every individual, the captain replied by informing the major that his plans could be

carried out without the slightest possibility of a double and without interference with other important work being carried on.

During the afternoon of September 20th fifteen French seven and one-half ton tanks were delivered to the Belleville division, each tank having its driver and gunner and a number of mechanics and spare men to take the place of casuals—if there should be any. All were good looking, healthy, happy American young men. The tanks were loaded on narrow gauge American flat cars, each of which just fit. Everything was carefully gone over, machine guns, one pounders, gas masks were tested and everything was ready for the start, which was made just at sundown. Two trains, two steam engines each, and two gas tractors. What a strange looking sight to see those little miniature trains climbing laboriously up the hillside with their cargo of death dealing machinery painted every color and spotted and splashed up in such a way that one might imagine that some novice landscape artist had made an attempt to put on canvas the ever-changing colors of a French sunset and then let his colors fall, besmearing the canvas until it could not be recognized. On they went until it was no longer safe to use steam engines, where gas tractors were cut in to go to a road crossing previously agreed upon, there to unload and go into action far in advance of the artillery positions and in easy range of the German riflemen. That made no difference with these men. They were soldiers and obeying orders, notwithstanding the fact that the curiosity of the Germans had been so aroused that they put up their observation balloons and looked the procession over just before Nature closed their observing eyes with



*Use of Camouflage in French Village*

that precious hoodwink so important in the game of war—darkness.

The tanks being unloaded, the fun began. Each with its muffler wide open, made all the noise possible, until those that could hear and not see could easily believe that every tank in the Allied Armies were there and manoeuvring—

going into position. Then, as if by magic, everything was as quiet as a country churchyard, the tanks coming quietly back to the point of loading, each climbing on its car, like so many elephants after a circus performance.

The Germans shelled the woods with high explosive and gas without result while we moved the trains back a distance of eight kilometers and changed direction. Moving to the front at right angles and twenty kilometers from the first stand, the tanks unloaded and went into a woods for the day. The following night a performance was put on at the new location. After the show all was loaded and moved back to Belleville before daylight, while Fritz made the music for the movement with his artillery.

The same morning the tanks were transferred to standard gauge cars and went to the Argonne to join that offensive. The show was over as far as we were concerned, and not a scratch, but not for the Boche. He was terribly worried and strengthened his air service to a great extent in that sector, putting in all his time in low flying, searching every wood, ravine and place of hiding, but of no use. What he was looking for wasn't there.

Then began the beginning of the end in an entirely different sector. While he had most of his aerial forces hunting phantom tanks and was moving reinforcements into an abandoned sector.

The company again upheld the name of the 21st Engineers and proved its sterling worth and value to the A. E. F. as will be shown by the following letter:

HEADQUARTERS, 302ND CENTER, TANK CORPS.

September 25, 1918.

From:

Major J. W. Viner A. C. of S., Tank Corps.

To:

C. O. 21st Lt. Ry. Engineers.

Subject:

Captain J. P. Nash, 21st Engineers.

1. I wish to express an appreciation of the good spirit and efficient work done by Captain J. P. Nash, 21st Lt. Ry. Engrs., and his men of the Belleville Division during the tank movement on the line during Sept. 20th-24th.

2. Our movements were tedious and long, and of uncertain character due to changes in plans and orders. In spite of this Captain Nash and his command were always ready to help us—day or night—and cheerfully to place us wherever we requested to go.

3. Any success we had in our combat maneuvers in that sector was due in no little degree to the help so cheerfully and timely given.

4. It is very gratifying for me to be able to give, in this way, my own thanks for the help given to me and my commands. When we were tired after the St. Mihiel, wet and fatigued, due to continuous night and day movements since that fight, we were "Braced Up" by this most excellent spirit and willingness to help of the 21st Engineers.

(Signed)

J. W. Viner,  
Major (cav.) T. C.  
Acting Chief of Staff.

The spirit of the men was most excellent. The only trouble experienced by the officers was to keep the men on their own jobs—every one wanted to go with the tanks. There wasn't room for them, but they didn't care, they would ride on top. It was pointed out that we were needed for train operation and they saw the matter in its proper light.

Some, however, did go away without leave and join the infantry, temporarily go into action a few times, then come home and report for duty.

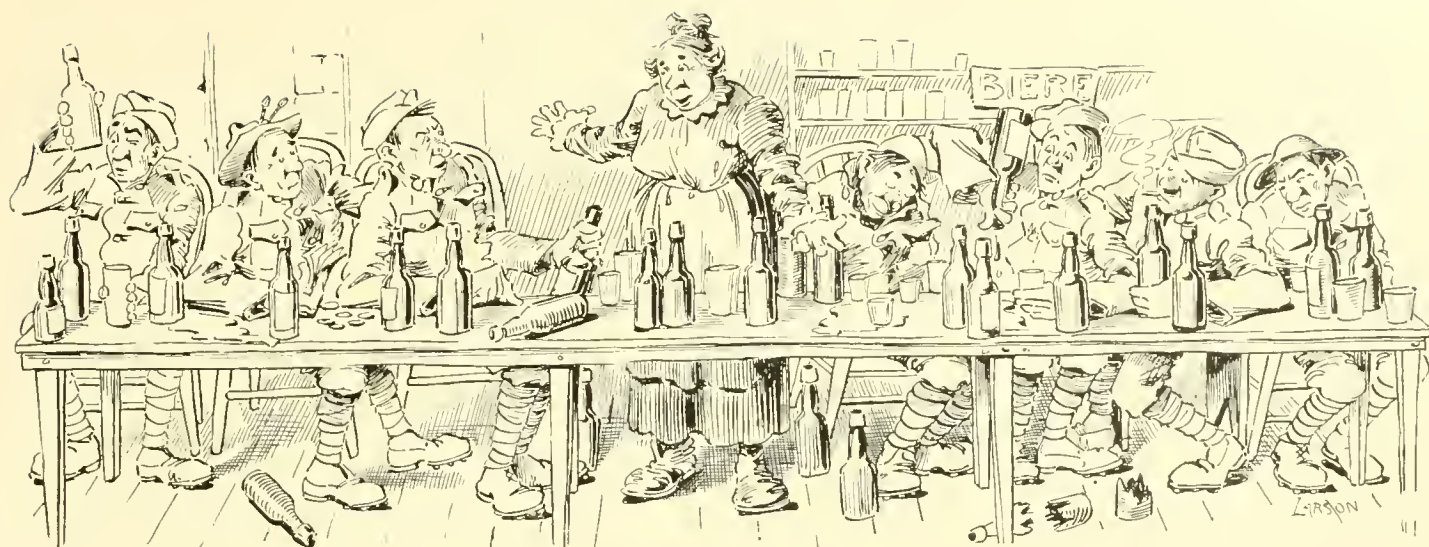
## TOURING FRANCE BY SOIXANTE (COMPANY E)

The 21st Engineers being relieved in the St. Mihiel sector, the regiment started moving to the Meuse-Argonne front early in October. Part of the regiment was moved on trucks, but Company E traveled on the narrow gauge.

Leaving Belleville, we proceeded to Seicheprey, which was the scene of the first real fight between the Americans and the Germans, where the 26th Division held a German attack in April. We camped here for the night, building improvised roofs on the cars out of boards and our shelter halves. The following morning we salvaged a Boche portable soup kitchen. After several derailments, the convoy reached the foot of Mount Sec, which was behind the German lines for four years and in plain view of our lines. We had heard many interesting stories of this mount, the French long considering it impregnable. The effects of artillery fire were everywhere in evidence and, owing to the deplorable condition of the track, our train was delayed considerably, giving us an opportunity to hunt souvenirs. Guy Baker entered a dugout but came out looking extremely pale, and after much effort succeeded in stammering out that he had seen a dead Boche. During the course of the day we passed through many ruined villages which were recently "liberated." One of our trains became lost and started toward the front line, but fortunately the mistake was discovered before it was too late.

At one point it was necessary to ascend a steep grade. The engine ran out of water, which was difficult to find, and night found us still in need. Here we found one of the companies of the Third Battalion, which we knew was in France, but had not encountered before. The supper was served by the light of a few candles. This light perturbed the Third Battalion men, who insisted on "lights out," but as we considered ourselves veterans, we took a chance and kept the lights burning until we finished our repast. It was impossible to stop for the night on the main line, so we moved on a few miles to a branch line and tied up for rest. The Boche evidently decided we were not going to rest and shelled the woods nearby and repeated it again in the morning. The shells landed so close that many of the boys "high tailed" for a dugout. We moved again at daylight, crossing old "No Man's Land" where there had been some hard fighting. The train was derailed several times, giving us a chance to explore the shell torn ground. Here we found skeletons, some still having their now rusty rifles lying beside them. There were immense concrete dugouts torn to pieces by large shells, everywhere a mass of ruins and shell holes. The earth appeared as if churned, rifles, bayonets, helmets, bones, wire, grenades, etc., all mixed together in a mass of debris. We did not stop for sleep that night, and in the early morning crossed the old lines at a point near "Dead Man's Hill," north of Verdun. We finally arrived at Cheppy and pitched our squad tents on the hillside just above the ruins of the village, thankful to be settled once more.





## A Hallowe'en Party = Company A

By Harry K. Underwood

It was in the latter part of October. We were following the advance of the doughboys who had slowly but surely ploughed their way through the Argonne. We followed in their wake through Dombasle, Malancourt, on by Montfaucon and were camped on the outskirts of Cierges when the following little incident happened:

We were sleeping in a hole dug in the ground near the "petite" tracks and banked up on the side facing Fritz to ward off flying shrapnel. About midnight the 31st of October one of our "Soixante cannon balls" drew in heavily loaded with ammunition. She puffed and snorted a few minutes to switch it into the siding, emitting quite a bit of steam and smoke. Once her firebox was opened and for a minute a dull glare streamed out into the darkness, which was evidently spied by Jerry, as he began throwing over "Dutch confetti," or 77s. I had been lying there awake for several minutes listening to the whistle and explosion of the shells as they pock-marked the side of the hill where two hundred and fifty men slept or attempted to sleep.

Up to this time no one had spoken, thinking the other was still asleep. I lay awake a few minutes longer hearing nothing but the steady breathing of my comrades broken only by the spasmodic explosion of another shell, when my ear was attracted by the soft whirr of a Boche aeroplane.

Somewhere away in the distance a dull b-o-o-m-m-m was heard floating through the still air. Within the next few minutes several more booms. They had ceased to float now and came in quick, sharp crashes, were heard when I felt a nudge in my ribs accompanied by a rather shaky whisper:

"Slim, Slim. Hey, Slim! Are you awake?" Before I could answer there came another nudge and again a rather jerky voice repeated:

"Slim, Slim. Hey, Slim—" but he got no further, for I didn't in the least need any urging and I answered immediately in about the same tone of voice.

"What is it, Ben?" I answered.

"What shall we do? Let's go to a dugout!" he replied, all in one breath.

I was pretty strong for going somewhere *right now*, but I wasn't exactly familiar with the lay of the land and I whispered back:

"Do you know where there is one?"

"Yes, there's one up the track about half a kilo."

"Well, let's go. Wake up Cy and Frei, get some blankets and beat it!"

It occurs to me now that Cy and Frei didn't need any more urging than I did and soon we were all four lighting out up the track as fast as the gloom and an ample amount of trailing blankets would allow. After tripping and stumbling several times apiece from our hobnails skidding on the smooth steel ties of sectional rail and stepping on the ends of hastily gathered blankets, we hove up to the entrance of the aforesaid dugout or "Unterstand" as the Germans had it labeled.

Ben was in the lead, I was a close second and Cy and Frei were running neck and neck for third place.

As Ben stooped to make the low entrance, pushing his big load of blankets ahead of him, his foot struck something that wobbled and flew back into place. Dropping his bundle he struck a flickering match. A pair of hobnails presented themselves. Beyond them the outlines of a man lying prone on his back loomed out of the inky darkness and beyond him more hobnails shaped themselves and more men, some lying, some half squatting and the rest standing up. A grotesque picture they made, their faces showing up strangely white against the thick darkness. The silence was positively uncanny. Not another inch of standing room and not a possible chance to step in out of the danger that, if anything, had increased in its fury on the outside.

Ben's only expression as he turned to tell us of the situation was nothing more than a disgusted wail.

"Aw, hell, fellows, the damn thing's full."

Well, to say the least, Ben's exclamation was very mild in comparison to three others that were uttered simultaneously after this bit of information had time to sink in.

Frei, who was the most vehement in his condemnation of various and divers kinds of luck, suddenly concluded that the wisest thing to do would be to calmly return to the

overgrown gopher hole we had so recently quitted to seek more substantial shelter.

"Come on, fellows, let's go back," he quietly said after his recent explosion of wrath. "If they're going to get us, let 'em get us there, 'twould be a hell of a note to catch it out here running around like a chicken with his head cut off."

The American artillery had in the meantime cut in on the celebration and were replying shot for shot, and the sky was kept lit up all about by the flash of 75s. This put more courage into us as we slowly trudged back to our old hole.

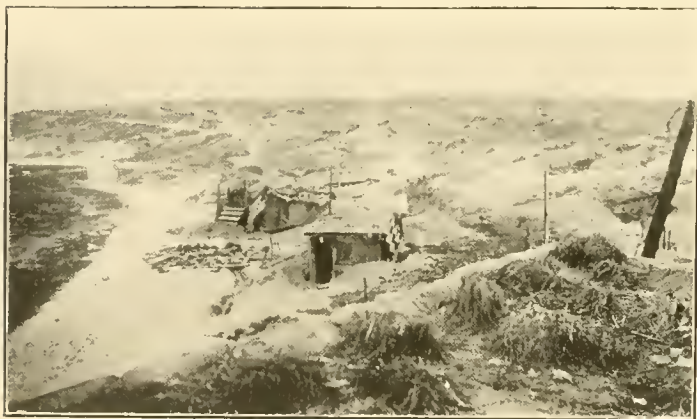
We walked along in silence for a few minutes, each man thinking to himself undisturbed, when I finally broke off the spell by a loud exclamation and a big burst of laughter. My companions looked at me in utter dismay, the thought flashing through their minds that I had probably gone daffy with excitement, but no such thing happened. I had only remembered that October 31st was Hallowe'en night and the joke was on us.

## ONE ON THE SAM BROWNS

*By Esterberg, Company A*

One October evening while the first platoon of A Company was stationed at Montfaucon, a number of "gandy dancers" were reviewing the past and the dirty deal the army was handing them. The results of the meeting was that all should go on the sick call the next morning, thereby getting a day off. Next morning, if you were watching the mess line, you would see some tired looking, sick and halt soldiers, complaining on the coarseness of army food, on the loss of appetite and the scarcity of eggs.

When sick call sounded they realized what a job they had before them, for all were big and husky and did not relish the thought of standing before the M. D. and telling



*Dugouts and Splinter Proofs*

how sick they were. Slim broke the ice by starting for the pill man, mustering all latent forces, goes in. No news from home, no news of war, could hold these men so spell-bound. Each one felt they were doing wrong, and how glad he would be if he could only break away, but the solemn vow made the night before held them to the mark.

How hard it was to wait! Was Slim ever going to come out? Finally he showed his tired and haggard face, but, oh, what a relief, he was smiling all over. They lost

no time in gathering about him, to hear his tale. The air was full of questions. What did he say? What did he do? What did you say? Slim threw out his chest and said: "It's easy. Why, a fellow can get away with murder when dealing with those pill peddlers." Slim told his colleagues that he was marked "overworked" and needed a day of rest. After telling his pals what to say, he exclaimed: "Get the rag out and let's get the poker game started."

All went well. The boys reported in turn, all came out with the same smile of victory on their faces. Noon came all too soon for the birds who were enjoying a day off. Slowly they took their places in the mess line, still looking sick and tired. When opposite the serving table, the sergeant in charge of the mess asked each one, "Are you on sick call?" The answer, "Yes, sir," came easily. "Well, there's an order here for light diet for those who went on sick call this morning." What a blow! Breakfast was slim because they put on a broken down appetite, but to have a cup of black coffee and a piece of bread handed you for dinner was too much for a bunch of hungry, lying engineers.

When the gang had all been served they gathered in the squad tent to see if anything could be done to meet the scarcity of food, and to relieve the pangs of hunger. All that could be heard from the outside was cursing and threats.

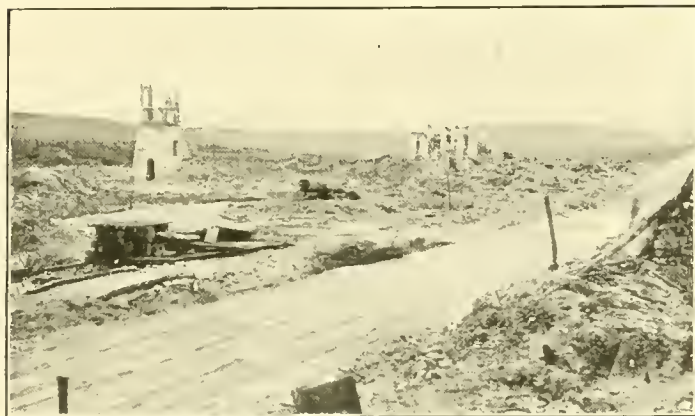
About 1.15 p. m. two of the gang were seen making their way to the yards. Others went to the woods, while the rest remained in the tent. What they were up to no one knew, but the smile on their faces plainly told that the difficulty was met, or soon to be. The two that went to the yards soon came back. One had a "No. 2" and the other a pick. In the open space in front of their tent a hole was started and by the way they handled their tools they meant business. The others came in from the outside world, some with wood, others with pieces of rail, and the last one with a piece of corrugated iron and two lengths of stove pipe. While the hole was being dug the others were making the iron flat with the tools most handy, which includes rocks. Slowly the hole took form, and it wasn't long before a fire was going and the paint on the iron was leaving this world.

We outsiders were still wondering what they were up to. Maybe they were going to wash some clothes, but why the smile? At last we got a clue. Slim opened the flap of the tent and asked "Where's the bucket?" Someone said "I don't know." But one knew. He said: "It's behind the tent with dirty clothes in it." Slim exclaimed "To hell with the dirty clothes—I want the bucket." Soon the bucket was free for its new duty. When the paint was well burnt off the iron it was cleaned with sand and water and then I knew what the game was. Some one said "attention" and out comes Slim with flour all over his clothes, and the bucket full of a mixture no one could ever make again. He asked "Is the iron ready?" "Oui" someone said. Slim was just about to try a batch when he realized that they had forgotten the grease.

They could never get it from the kitchen, so some other must be found. Someone discovered bacon and another a helmet, and no time was lost for the grease was soon coming from its hiding place. The big event was on its way. The griddle was greased and the first batch of batter was put to the test. The first cake was a failure. You would have agreed with me had you seen it, for it was over two feet



square and the rest had run over on the ground and into the fire. After adding more pancake flour and stirring it well with the squad stove poker, the chef again tried his luck. Such cakes could never be found at home. Big, small, thick, thin, pale colored and brown and more burned than cooked, but they were good, for butter, milk and syrup was to be had in quantity, and, oh, such coffee. My



*Road Through Devastated Region*

only regret was that I couldn't stay and eat my share, for the captain ordered his car for a trip to Vraincourt. This same captain no doubt had his foot in the eats the boys got for dinner. He saw he was licked, so all he could do was look hard and go his way.

## FAMOUS NOVEMBER FIRST ADVENTURE OF COMPANY B

*By Sergeant Holmes*

For several days we had been getting rumors of a big offensive to take place soon and knew that when it started we would be called on for our bit. On the afternoon of October 31st we were ordered to quit work and go into camp. We knew that the next day would be a strenuous one. After supper the tools, kitchen and rations were loaded on narrow gauge cars and everything made ready for an early start next day. We were not to break camp, but two squads were left to guard and keep everything ready for our return which we expected would be several days later. The roar of artillery greeted us the next morning when we boarded our train, which was operated by a crew from E Company.

As we passed the artillery positions shells evidently meant to silence our big guns began landing near the track and once we were delayed for half an hour while the track was repaired where a "G. I. can" had found a resting place a few minutes before. At about 7.30 o'clock we arrived at Marcq, formed in company front, unslung our packs and procured tools preparatory to going to work. This was accelerated somewhat by Fritz, who evidently discovered our presence about this time and began tossing gentle reminders our way in the form of big shrapnel shells. These filled the air with whining bits of metal that made the place unhealthful. One small piece found lodgment in the ankle of one of the men, Corporal Walworth, and leaving him in care of the "medics" we hastened on up the track, thankful that duty did not call for a protracted stay in this spot.

Before we had gone far word was passed along that the Boche had made a direct hit on the engine which had pulled us up and that the engineer and fireman were both horribly wounded, with very slight chance for recovery. Most of us knew these men and this news stimulated our determination to get busy and do our best. We found a beautiful piece of narrow gauge waiting to be repaired. The Germans had simply moved one rail of a standard gauge road over and made an almost perfect narrow gauge, in excellent line and surface. However, as they retreated they had blown up every third or fourth joint and every switch with dynamite. Our work was to repair this damage. We worked ahead toward Grand Pre with Jerry eternally throwing his "big ones" and "whizz-bangs" at us. Intermittently we repaired track and hugged the bottom of some friendly ditch as each succeeding shell screamed its approach.

I would not give the impression that our own artillery was idle. We were surrounded by gun positions and our gunners must have sent over at least ten shells to every one of the Germans. There were many narrow escapes, thanks to quick movements ditchward and to plain luck. Many of us were covered with mud splattered by shells that exploded near us. In fact, one party arose after a shattering explosion to find their guns, which had been stacked within a few feet, had been entirely destroyed by a shell. We worked ahead to where we had orders to stop, and here the mess sergeant and cooks overtook us with dinner, which they had pushed all the way from Marcq in a small flat car. Never had "gold fish" tasted so good. In fact, lots of us ate it with relish for the first time.

We continued to work till late in the afternoon and then trudged back to our packs and began digging in for the night. Of course, Fritz, thoughtful as ever, remembered us about supper time and the scream of falling shrapnel was responsible for more than one failing appetite. However, the fear that we would be favored with more of his attentions in the shape of gas shells during the night failed to materialize, and every one enjoyed a perfect night's rest which such a strenuous day always brings. The next morning at 4.00 o'clock we were up and busy eating breakfast and soon after we were out completing the work



*Effect of Shell Fire on French Buildings*

we had started the day before. The Germans had been driven out during the night and were retreating and disturbed us very little this day. Early afternoon found us and the train going back to Cheppy, singing and happy, with a feeling of duty well done and knowing that a hot supper and a good night's rest awaited us.

## A HOSPITAL EXPERIENCE

During the St. Mihiel drive, while riding a salvaged German engine, which ran into some track, damaged by shell fire, I was injured. An ambulance passing the camp was stopped and I was placed in a French collapsible litter and conveyed to a field hospital at Beaumont. The hospital was on the second floor of the only intact building in town, which prior to the drive was part of the third line trenches. The hospital was crowded and I was placed in the hallway with four other patients. Here the French collapsible litter justified its name and collapsed, causing me to lie on the concrete floor of the hallway with the result that I was almost frozen to death. The place was infested with rats and I was obliged, due to my helpless condition, to lie there and watch the rats hurdle my body in an effort to get to the traveling rations of the patients beyond me. There was quite a contrast between the upper and lower floors of the building. The lower floor was used as a Salvation Army hut and the soldiers came in played the piano, sang and enjoyed themselves as much as possible. During my stay here we were visited by the Salvation Army girls who gave us doughnuts and hot chocolate. I have never eaten anything, either before or since, that tasted as good as these doughnuts and chocolate. From the field hospital I was transferred to an evacuation hospital at Toul, where my case was diagnosed as a medical case and I was promptly shipped to Base Hospital No. 82. This was a very large hospital, having eighteen sections with eleven wards to each section. The medical detachment here had only been in France a short time and the patients were given the very best of treatment. I was taken into the receiving ward and later taken to the bath house and given a sort of a Turkish bath. It certainly felt fine to be real clean once more. I was then assigned to the ward that handled such cases as mine. The nurses were very inexperienced at handling soldiers, having spent most of their time taking care of refugees and babies. They gave us the same treatment they had been giving the babies, so it is easy to see that we were well taken care of. In this ward were men from every branch of the service in the United States Army. They all told stories of the battles they had been in with



*Romagne-en-Argonne*

the result that a good many battles were fought in that little ward that never happened on a battlefield. Improved in health, I was moved from ward to ward until I became a walking patient. After becoming a walking patient, I would go through the different wards giving the fellows the news. When there wasn't any news to give, I

would manufacture some. After a short time I was given clothes and assigned to light duty. Here I might mention that each patient was given his day's work to do to determine whether he was physically fit to go back to his outfit as a Class A man or whether he should be marked



*Red Cross Nurses Assisting the Emergency Field Hospital at Sorcy*

Class B or C and sent to the S. O. S. to do such duties as he could perform. While I was doing light duty I was very curious to go through all the departments and learn the workings of the hospital. I told them I had had experience at first aid so was assigned to take care of sick calls. Later worked in the drug department, medical department, Red Cross supply, morgue and finally as assistant to the personnel officer. To the kitchen force, which was practically all French, I passed as a sanitary inspector and since I had only nice things to say about the way they kept their kitchen, I fell in for quite a large share of the little luxuries that the cooks made for themselves. One day, feeling that the patients were not getting enough candy, I took it upon myself to steal a large cake of chocolate from the kitchen to distribute among them as far as it would go. A French girl, who had evidently had considerable hand grenade experience, caught me in the act and made a direct hit with an open can of Eagle brand condensed milk, causing me to take a bath and make a complete change of clothes.

In one of the wards was an opera singer of international reputation, and he promised to sing for us providing I would get a piano and some songs. I received the loan of a piano and music from the officers and at the suggestion of the colonel, rounded up all the talent I could and put on a little vaudeville show. The program was made up of the following acts: The opera singer, Broadway Kelly, a buck and wing dancer, a trap drummer from Philadelphia, who played the traps on a bread pan; a piano bumper from Frisco, an Irish comedian from Wyoming and finally a memory expert. Everybody was highly pleased with the show and I suppose they have put on many more such little shows with talent taken from among the patients. My time expired and I was marked Class A and sent back to my outfit. I went through an equipment camp, where I received a brand new outfit, then to a replacement camp, where I got intense drilling for a week or so, and finally to a distribution camp, where the R. T. O. gave me transportation back to my command. I want to say a word of praise about the Red Cross. On my trips both to and from the hospital I was kept supplied with candy, cookies, cigarettes, chewing gum and many other little luxuries by industrious workers of the American Red Cross organization.



# A Permission

By W. A. Stone

After an exciting time with the French "Chef de Gare" we finally got our "ordre de transport" fixed up and together with other necessary credentials that go to prove we are not A. W. O. L. should an over-conscientious M. P. pick us up, we rushed to the depot to catch the 7 o'clock train which true to tradition and French schedules was two hours late.

Being well nigh exhausted by all these preliminaries, we returned to our apartments and waited for the "Chemin de Fer." We sat with our overcoats and hats still on and our mussett bags slung over our shoulders ready to "partir tout-de-suite" when our belated train arrived. Every toot from the switch engines in the yard startled us to instant mobility only to subside again to a game of solitaire or a slant at an old magazine.

Promptly at nine p. m. the festive train of side door coupes arrived with sweet scents of vin rouge and garlic permeating the atmosphere. We five hard and semi-hard boiled "slim gauge" boys boarded the train and started on what was to be a glorious tour of France. The first lap from Conflans to Nancy, a distance of only about fifty kilometers took only, with the present rapid transit service of the Est Railroad Company, seven hours.

The train was cold and dark and dreary.  
It stopped and we were froze and weary.  
The town of Nancy we espied and made a raid,  
To a cafe, to warm our bones on lemonade (!)

At that hour the only place open was a tea room which served hot chocolate only. However, this served to thaw us out. We then spent the balance of the morning unto dawn at the Y. M. C. A. cursing the institution like a lark before a fireless stove.

At six a. m. we had breakfast at this worthy place and with a full mouth and an empty stomach we again rushed for a train, the 6.30 for Dijon. To say the least we caught it.

We would have caught the same train at noon if we had waited that long, but the French patrons seem to get there on time and if you are to be "a la mode" and get a seat, you have to follow suite.

We all proenred places but not together, so the only conversation for the balance of that day was in pantomime. I was in a compartment with one Lieutenant, two women, two civilians and two soldiers, all French, each having the omnipotent vin rouge and a hunk of bread. The French have a faculty of becoming quickly acquainted and in a few moments all my fellow travelers were in mutual conversation. Being of a reclining disposition, I meekly sat back quietly listening and enjoying them in their native state.

The conversation led from one thing to a million others as far as I was concerned, but upon hearing the word *Americaine*, I opened my ears and caught some remarks that pertained to myself. I did not catch the gist of it

but pretended to understand and when they laughed I joined them and then they became embarrassed. It reminded me of an instance that occurred to me. I was trying to rent a room in a village where I was billeted, and with all my best French and nerve, I asked the Madame if she had a room to rent and—relaxing after the struggle to get those words out of my system, she answered in good English, "No, I am sorry, but I can not accommodate you." I at once tried to recollect what I said in her presence as we Americans say many things to the French that we would not say if they understood.

Another incident on that train. A French "Croix Rouge" worker came through the train for a collection. She looked in our compartment and upon seeing an American, asked for a donation. An American to them is "ready money." I gave her a franc but she did not tackle the French Lieutenant, who became very sleepy until she had left. He then looked up and smiled at me.

Our route took us through Epinal and Chilandry and then to Dijon, where we arrived in time for a good dinner. Until that dinner I was under the impression that a good French dinner could only be had in an American city, but I am convinced that it is occasionally possible in France.

We checked in at the A. P. M. (American Provost Marshal) which is a necessary procedure wherever a soldier, officer, nurse, Y. M. C. A. or Red Cross worker or any one in the American Army service, should perchance be. The A. P. M. tells you how long you can stay and



*The Casino, Monte Carlo*

what train you must leave on. Beware of the M. P. if you did not pay your visit to the A. P. M. Of course the "bucks" all like to put it over on the A. P. M. and often get away with it. The satisfaction of a few hours overstay in a town seems to be worth the chance of a couple of months in the brig.

Dijon is a very clean modern French city with crowded hotels. We have learned that you can see the sights of Dijon best by looking for a room. We wandered over the entire town and finally located some rooms in an ancient hotel. Hotel Savage! And as the name, so was the hotel.

Listen, my people, and you shall hear  
Of a place which is so strange and queer;  
Where thieves and crooks hang out galore,  
Who worked within and out the law.  
Many tales have been told  
Of revolutions fierce and bold,  
Of how the famous "Guil-lo-teen"  
Chopped off more heads than steen.  
In this Hotel Savage was laid  
The plot that for the French was made  
A land for honest folks and crook—  
And in this place, a room we took.

It was indeed a picturesque place. A carriage entrance led to the court yard where the landlady, a wicked eagle beaked, round shouldered individual, greeted us with many bows so characteristic of the French. She showed us to our room, which was away up in the attic. When we en-



*Bird's-Eye View of the Rock of Monaco and Monte Carlo*

tered the room it was apparently unoccupied, but after reclining a sort of creeping sensation told us that there were strangers present.

After climbing down a ladder at 3 a. m. we quietly stole away into the darkness and hid ourselves to the Gare to catch a train for Lyons. This time the train left as per schedule. That is the disagreeable feature of French transportation, the train occasionally leaves on time, so it is absolutely essential to be on the dot. We boarded the 1st class section and were requested by the conductor to move to the third class. We decided not to understand him, but slipped him a package of cigarettes, he shrugged his shoulders, raised his arms in utter defeat and left us. Soldiers are supposed to travel third class, but an American cannot see it that way, and usually travels first class and crabs at second class, rides third class under protest. We arrived at Lyons in the morning and talked the A. P. M. (an almost impossible feat) into allowing us to stop over 24 hours.

Lyons is a very beautiful city of a million people. It is situated at the junction of the Saone and Rhone rivers which are spanned by very artistic and graceful bridges, one being dedicated to President Wilson ("Pont de Wilson"). We put up at one of the best hotels and slept in the king's suite, one of the most luxurious chambers I have ever seen, and whee! Like sleeping on air. Such a contrast after sleeping on boards for a year.

War is hell the soldier said,  
As he lay in his bomb-proof bed,  
For I have sought the rest, that could not be,  
For feather beds with canopy  
We have forsaken for the war,  
And slumbers sweet we'll have no more  
Until triumphantly we have returned,  
And tell the world what we have learned,  
And upon our couches so sweet and pure,  
Shall all the bumps upon us cure.

We toured the city from one corner to another with no end of interest, we visited many modern shops and restaurants and felt like prosperous civilians until an M. P. hove into view and told us to button our coats and take our hands out of our pockets. We walked through the older part of Lyons where the poorer people reside, or rather exist, and would suggest it as a good field for a settlement worker. Taking a cog-wheel tramway up a hill we arrived at a very pretty section of the city and here we found a high steel observation tower which rises to a height of 1,500 feet above the city and a magnificent view of the surrounding country can be seen from here. The winding Saone and Rhone rivers disappearing in the distance after flowing through the richest grape country and fruit belt of France and away off to the east about 200 miles, the high snow crest of the Alps are in plain view. We made the acquaintance of two mademoiselles who had been to the states and spoke English well. They guided us around to many points of interest and in the evening we went to a vaudeville show, in French, but very good as far as I know.

The next a. m. we caught the train for Marseilles, but as it was a permissionaire train and a bit slow we decided to get off at the first town where the A. P. M. was not.

Life would be so sweet and grand,  
And joy would be supreme,  
If one could travel through the land  
Where he has never been.

Valence being the first place where the M. P.'s were conspicuous by their absence, we detrained and spent a few hours in this modern little town which showed Spanish renaissance influence, especially its architecture. We boarded a first class express train for Nice but were obliged to stand up for thirteen hours without food or drink except a can of sardines and some raw eggs, purchased at a canteen at one of the depots. The semi tropical country we were now traveling through abounded in oranges, lemons, figs, and olives and presented a decidedly different aspect from the mud of northern France. Our train took us through Avignon, an historic place, having been the seat of the papacy for 70 years during the 14th century. We passed through Marseilles in the evening, arriving at Nice at 11 P. M., after a ride along the blue Mediterranean. We were assigned to a hotel where we were to spend the eight days as guests of Uncle Sam and we were indeed well taken care of.

Nice is an ancient city originally built by the Phoecean-Greeks and has been the scene of many conflicts but since its annexation to France in 1860 it has been the rendezvous of the whole world. Never before in its history did she have the aspect she now wears, and the Queen of the Riviera will probably never again have quite the same appearance. The greatest change being around the Quay de Anglais and the Palace du Jettée which is now occupied by the Y. M. C. A. for the enlisted men on leave. The modern or major part of Nice is a mass of fine hotels. It has wonderful parks with palms and oranges and flowers of every description. From the top of Chateau Rock,



which rises out of the water, one can see the snow covered "Alps Maritime." The colorings of the mountains that skirt along the coast are marvelous. The weather is unsurpassed, warm sunny days and cool comfortable nights.

The Y. M. C. A. has here made up for much that it failed to do in the advanced areas. It conducts a large canteen and restaurant, billiard and pool hall, theatre, lecture and motion picture theatre, writing and reading rooms and dancing with real American girls, nurses, Y. M. C. A. and Red Cross workers. The children of Nice have been taught the chewing gum vice and continually pester the Americans for gum and cigarettes.

Nice is probably the most cosmopolitan resort in Europe and is an ideal place the year round. The afternoons are devoted to promenading, and along the Esplanade you will find the aristocracy of Europe and their dogs and silk stockings forming an important part of the passing show. And of course at the present time you find soldiers of every Allied nation in their national uniforms.

We made an excursion via auto to Monaco, Monte Carlo, Menton and made our debut into Italy. Monaco is the spotless town of Europe and is the home of his majesty Prince Hoyle. We visited the oceanographic museum and aquarium which is said to be the most complete exhibit of its kind. We made an attempt to enter the Prince's Palace, but were outflanked by his army who stood guard at the portal. He told us to "On ne passe pas," which means keep out. We became peeved at his lack of hospitality and I am afraid we slandered his majesty before leaving his kingdom. A magnificent view of Monte Carlo and its casino can be had from Monaco looking over the pretty little harbor lying between.

We then left for Monte Carlo, a classy busy little place with fine hotels and parks and beautiful villas that make it a very desirable place to squander your millions. We explored the Casino and went through the gambling rooms which are very luxurious, having wonderful paintings of beautiful women to take your mind off your losses while playing roulette. On the sea side are handsome gardens and promenades. Also a fine parapet overhanging the Mediterranean and making a splendid place to commit suicide.

Menton, the most south-easterly town of France, which is similar to the other places along the Cote de Azur, as the French call the Riviera, has also its gambling casino for the relief of over-burdened bank accounts. We were then taken to the Italian border where the auto was not permitted to pass, we got off and walked about a half mile into Italy and found that Italian is really the language of the country.

After sixteen eventful days we started on our return trip, leaving Nice at midnight on a special train for American permissionaires. Before starting we provided ourselves with a huge loaf of French bread built on the doughnut principle with the exception that the dough taken out of the hole is added to the washer of life, it could hardly be called the staff, also we bought a large sausage, some cookies and a petite bottle of cognac. We would have died of cold and starvation if it were not for our forethought based on experience. The night we spent on that train was the coldest in my vast experience. The steam heat was not working and added to this affliction, quite common to French trains, loaned to Americans, the windows were broken, leaving a nice cool breeze into our refrigerator. As soon as we left the Mediterranean to our rear, we found France covered with snow and ice which probably extended to the pole.

After 21 hours we arrived at Dijon, tired and hungry. The train was not going to stop there but slowed down a mile outside of the depot awaiting the signal for an open block. We looked out, saw no M. P.'s and one by one we disappeared down a stairs that lead to the street below, and made haste to a restaurant where we fed our famished stomachs. We then hunted the four corners of Dijon for a hotel with an empty room, but upon failing we reluctantly accepted the hospitality of a reclining chair at the Y. M. C. A.

Leaving the following morning on another "American Express," which contained box cars with the well known inscription on the door "40 hommes, 8 cheveaux," which means 40 men or 8 horses. The train stopped at every siding and often on the main line for a few hours with apparently no reason but to get us back to our regiment late. About 4 A. M. the train stopped and after a few hours immobility we looked out to discover our where-



*Two Tailors and Regiment Shop*

abouts and found that we were a mile or so out of Neuf Chateau.

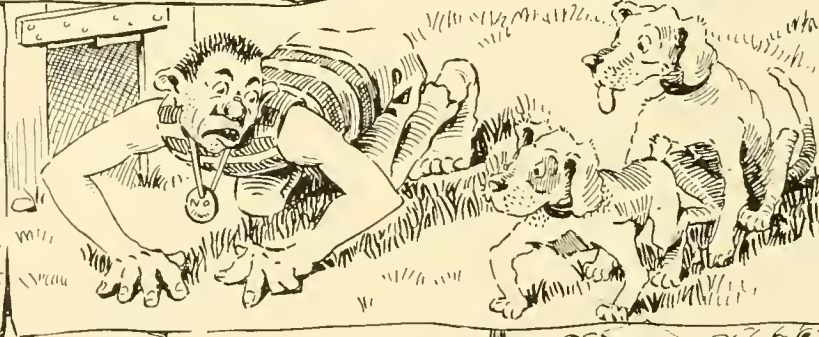
We walked to town and procured breakfast at the Red Cross canteen. After waiting till noon and our train still at the same spot, we asked a major to take us to Toul in his automobile. After looking at our travel orders, he consented, and we were there in an hour. We caught the train of the day before for Nancy.

We stopped at the Y. M. C. A. hotel and started on the last lap to Conflans early in the morning, arriving at Conflans at noon in time for a meal of beans and bacon. My what a come down!

These trips around France are wonderful experiences, but the traveling to and fro takes away lots of the enjoyment.

You can talk of Sunny France,  
The land of quaint romance,  
Where snow and mud and rain  
Over it, for centuries, has lain.  
Where wars and revolutions old,  
Fought by warrior knights so bold,  
And kings great, wise, and cruel,  
France has witnessed their tyrannic rule,  
And how the great Napoleon  
Made the hordes of Europe run,  
Until he met his Waterloo,  
And all his mighty powers blew,  
And now she's a great Democracy,  
Like America across the sea,  
Where God has blessed us one and all.  
My friends, heed not old Europe's call,  
Though quaint Europe's art may be choice,  
See our own America first.





LARSON



# In the Alps

By W. L. Garren

Every man who has enjoyed a permission has had about the same experiences, differentiated only in numbers of bottles or escapades avec la femme.

However, there is a third feature which is enjoyed to a greater or lesser degree according to personal appreciation for the scenic. For those who enjoy the wonders of the seashore, field and mountains; France is liberally endowed and should furnish no end of pleasure. I will here endeavor to describe a trip into the Alps, which I believe has been the pleasure of few soldiers, not that I feel that I could do justice to this wonderland, only the ravings of a poet or the florid descriptions of authors of great renown could portray the beauties of this region.

Boarding a permissionaire train at Lyons in the early morning of a clear, crisp day, our route lead us along the valley of the Rhone River. After a few hours' ride across the plains we reached the foothills and then the mountains. This valley is beautiful, passing little villages and mile after mile of vineyards, every available piece of ground being under cultivation, and here and there an old chateau or ruin standing as a landmark of the romantic past. The coloring on the mountains in the early morning is marvelous. This type of country continues until Aix les Bains is reached, which is located on Lake Bourget and is a famous bathing place and at present one of the leave areas for the American soldiers.

From Aix, the route is along the Fier River and past the famous Gorge du Fier at Lavagny, until Annecy is reached. Annecy, situated on Lake Annecy, is an old Italian town, very picturesque with a stream through it, and it reminds one of a Venetian canal, the doors of the houses opening directly on the boat landings.

A circle of white and purple ragged peaks and an early morning haze, truly made a rare and mysterious setting for the gem-like lake. Its shores are dotted with old castles each with a legend of itself and its ancient and lordly master.

It was 4.30 P. M. and rather dark when we boarded the Geneva Swiss express. As this train went into Switzerland, we changed at La Roche, a small town in a valley. The ride from here to St. Gervais was one continual succession of wonders. Picture a wonderful moonlight night, clear, crisp and ringing. Picture being down in a little valley spotted here and there with small villages, pronounced by a church tower and now and then a bell tinkling intermittently on the stillness, a winding stream crossing to one side and then the other. And then to look up and for thousands of feet see nothing but towering pyramids of snow and ice. We stop a while and people come to the train selling Swiss chocolate. The children are curiously amused at American soldiers and coyishly crept along the station platform gazing at us. Smaller valleys are seen in every direction, here are the chalets (Swiss House) we have often seen pictured, with their long pitched roofs and

extending eaves perched in odd positions almost tempting the mountains to fall upon them. Large boulders hold the shakes on the roof against the wind and snow. Balconies project in front supported by huge wooden corbels. Light sawed board railings that contrast sharp against the light colored plaster of the walls. This is merely the introduction to our wonderland.

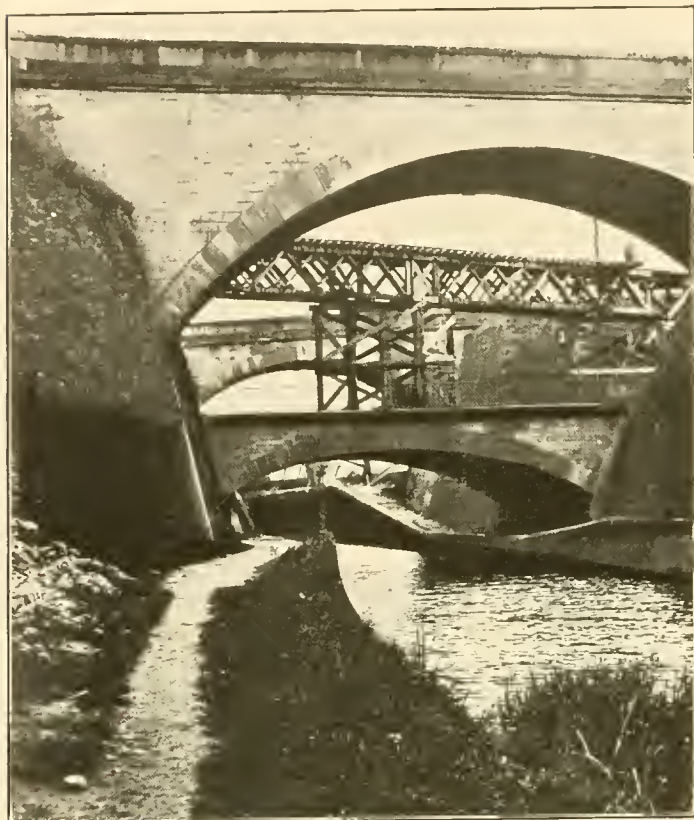
In our compartment are two Y. M. C. A. girls and a rather elderly Colonel of the Marines who appears to be chaperoning them. The Colonel goes to sleep and we spend a few very pleasant hours with these American girls. What a pleasure to talk to a girl in English. We spend the evening counting the Alps we pass and picking out wild chalets and rave about the scenery. They are very nice girls and we get along fine.

Now we arrive in St. Gervais, the last town on the steam railway. Here we disembark and board a very modern electric railway to make the ascent to the valley of the Chamonix. This proved to be the most beautiful night ride I have ever taken. Starting out from a lovely little valley at St. Gervais we begin immediately to climb a very steep grade, approximately 6 or 7 per cent. If I try to describe this ride I can only under-picture it to you: I can best say that to me it seems as though a huge book of childhood fairyland opens before me. Here is the Valley in the Moon, weird and clothed in the white snow for fairy palaces and gardens. Nature is evident in all its crystalline adornments. Trees and rocks are covered with icicles, taking the forms of their foliage and jagged surfaces. The moon on the ice and snow makes a study in blue and white. Few dwellings of man are to be seen and such as do appear seem to be the summer homes of some god who is probably now on earth basking in the sun of California or Nice. This is truly the home of Santa Claus for I am sure from what pictures I have seen of the gentleman that he must sit up here all summer making toys and reading letters from children and when old winter draws near he hitches up his reindeers and sleigh and with a long run soars down to earth to distribute his wares. This heaven is never to end for soon we feel the motors under the car begin to strain; the grade is getting steeper. We look out and a thousand feet below in sheer drop a tiny stream can be seen, just a melting streak in the snow. Up this valley is the great Mont Blanc, rising to the clouds 16,000 feet of ice. At the top a large silver moon resting, awaiting the time to shine on earth.

It is of interest here to note that we started out with the idea that we were breaking regulations by going so near the Swiss border, which was prohibited by General Headquarters, but upon arriving at Chamonix much to our surprise we learned that a new American leave area was about to be opened and aside from the officer and several men in charge of the place, together with the two "Y" girls who had come up with us we are the first Americans on permission to arrive and we are welcomed by the

men and officers, instead of having to sneak into the place. We are placed in the Mont Blanc Hotel, the finest in the town, and served in such style as would have made any king rave in envy. Our room is large, with three wonderful *French* single beds, fine modern sanitary wash-stands, hot and cold water and everything.

The room has French windows which open onto a balcony and the panoramic view of the Chamonix valley lies before us. At the upper end is the famous "Mere de Glace" or "Sea of Ice." This glacier moves very slightly



*Sorcy Bridges, Showing Support at Center of French Arch*

and in it are found wonderful precious stones, opals, amethysts, and other fine glasses, which the natives sell with great expression of mystery and the many tales they tell of bodies of dead explorers, lost for years to be thrown up by the glacier in a perfect state of preservation. Well here we are on the top of the earth. Our Concierge, in English "chief bell hop and tip gatherer" tells us we can in the morning perhaps yes, to ski, if we like, or skate or bob-sled, mebe? and after looking over a few people with their faces bandaged up we decide that ski-ing and bob sleighing is a rather tender sport for amateurs, but feeling that having gone through the war we can withstand anything, we go to bed ready to arise early and try our skill.

After the usual French "petite Dejeuner" or excuse for breakfast, our crusade begins, the native kids all gather round, they had probably seen us enter the town the night before and are out early to watch us ski. Fitting on the skis we just look at each other and laugh, asking (in Russian) do youski? and receive the answer whatski? oh, "oui." whiskey. Well, a ski is a long piece of flexible wood that extends about two and one half feet each way on each of your feet so that when you try to walk in the slippery snow it seems like you have altogether a total of twelve feet

to control. The first thought and the only safe one when you start out is to slide over sideways and squat like a baby and then climb up again so you can fall down better the next time. Well, we soon learn how to walk and as there is to be an international bobsled race we proceed to the place of the race, a long toboggan or path in the snow and here we gaze upon the elite of France. Beautiful mademoiselles in lovely colored and white knit sport suits. "Ooo la! la!" and they frolic around in the snow much to our amusement and often to their distress and discomfort. Quite unlike most French girls, they are not very sociable, so we decide they are of the aristocracy and to ski alone for we can tumble just as good as they. The race is pulled off and the sleds race about 120 miles an hour and we five challenge the winners who are Americans, till then we do not need any practice. All one has to do is to have enough nerve to start and once started only a damn fool would let loose of that sled. They refuse to accept so we decide to have a race of our own in the afternoon. So with tiny bobsleds just like those which are sold in the stores before Christmas, we hike the highest Alp for a coast down. Meet some plebians or middle class girls who speak no English, but are willing to ski with us fluently, and we do. We race and run and tumble. "Ooo la, la," is about the only common phrase we are sure all understand and there is ample excuse for "Ooo, la, las" for a run and a jump on your belly onto the sled and off you go down the hill from left to right until some snow bank interferes and then "Ooo, la, la."

We return to our hotel in the evening rather tired but ready to enjoy every minute of our time. Someone suggests an idea which is enthusiastically taken up by all. The idea is that we being the only American guests in the town, it is our place to entertain the "Y" girls in the town—fine, all fixed; whist game; hike in the snow on skis; return to hotel; party. The girls we came up on the train with are to be the fortunate parties so, everything set, we proceed out to round up said girls. Looking for the girls' hotel, we meet a "Y" man and tell our story—"Fine, fine, oui, oui." Question: "Where does Miss ———, the girl we came up on the train with last night, live?" Answer by unsuspecting "Y" man: "Oh, you mean the colonel's wife?" We in chorus: "Bon soir, Monsieur, bon soir."

We all walk about the town buying post cards and if ever there was a pretty sight it is to see this Alpine village with its peaked roofs and little church all mantled in snow, sleighs gliding with their tinkle bells here and there, through the crooked streets. We go back to our hotel and hold a council of war, i. e., shall we, or shall we not, go to Rome? Common sense and good judgment, together with a knowledge of the fact that our pass reads Nice and once in Italy we might have difficulty in explaining in Italian our credentials, we decide to live up to our pass and go to Nice; another thing that prompts us not to go A. W. O. L. is that it would be hardly good manners for the regimental sergeant major, three master engineers and a private to be caught in Rome. The evening passes with the usual raving about Alps, the peace conference always gets an hour's argument, and whether or not to shave, or what trains to catch, as there is only one a day out of Chamonix, we save an hour's debate and go to bed, satisfied that if we do not see another thing or place in France, we have seen the best of the highest mountain in Europe and the most beautiful part of the Alps.



## C'EST LA GUERRE

(Say la Gare)

*By Sergeant Harry E. Steycert*

If you should ask the reason why,  
Back in old U. S. A.,  
That prices are so very high  
And the reason for delay,  
They'd answer you without a sigh  
And without needless pause,  
If you must know the reason why,—  
It's, just because.

It's altogether different here,  
In Sometimes Sunny France;  
We hate to leave our camp for fear  
They'll rob us of our pants,  
No matter what we see or buy,  
The prices are unfair,  
Their answer for an alibi  
Is "C'est la Guerre."

We go into a baker shop,  
A loaf of punk to buy,  
The clerk scans us from toes to top,  
Then prices go sky-high.  
The khaki boys all shed their frames  
For little do they care,  
The Frogs take us for National Banks,  
Again it's "C'est la Guerre."

If we're inclined to pay a call,  
To village movie shows,  
Two frames to lean against the wall,  
And three for middle rows.  
The words and scenes are Greek to us,  
And room with stuffy air  
Would almost drive a saint to cuss,  
But—"C'est la Guerre."

Now should we visit a cafe,  
Or some Hotel de Gink,  
Strong prices we are forced to pay,  
For weak, diluted drink.  
Rum, ale and whiskey are denied,  
We're turned down everywhere;  
Refused the juice we highly prize,  
For, "C'est la Guerre."

Our mothers' meals we'll ne'er forget,  
For food our stomachs ache:  
Some French fried spuds, egg omelet  
With a great big juicy steak.  
An oyster stew, and a cut of pie,  
Some ice cream rich and rare,  
'Tis but a dream, for they reply—  
"Finish, C'est la Guerre."

For cakes and fruits and all as such,  
They surely rob the Yanks;  
The prices asked are twice too much,  
With not a bit of thanks.  
One price for France, and one for us,  
But little do they care,  
For when we ask them why 'tis thus,  
Encore—"C'est la Guerre."

Inquire why the train is late,  
The service why so rank;  
And everything is out of date,  
Their progress seems a blank.  
They crowd us in a railroad hack,  
Canned sardines don't compare;  
They have the nerve to tell us that  
Is also, "C'est la Guerre."

Now when we choose to promenade  
With bright eyed girls of France;  
And often times we take and parade  
Them to a village dance,  
And when we court our dear French Miss,  
We would not hope nor dare,  
To have more than one hug and kiss—  
For, "C'est la Guerre."

Six days per week we're always blessed  
With liberal mud and rain;  
It puts our patience to a test,  
And hopes seem all in vain.  
We're over here and can't get back,  
Now what could cause all this?  
There is no war, but now the crack  
Is, "C'est la Armistice."

No matter how we'd kick or groan,  
When overcharge or sore,  
They could not speak with honest tone,  
And say, "It is the war."  
We do not whine, nor kick nor care,  
Nor do we ask for thanks,  
We know it was not "C'est la Guerre,"  
But "C'est la Yanks."

## OUR HOGS

*By John M. Patton, Company E*

During the spring of 1918, while Company E was stationed at Meuil-la-Tour, our mess sergeant, with the assistance of several other members of the company, managed to buy two small O. D. pigs. Quarters were erected for them in a Frenchman's field over the railroad back of the camp. At the time this all looked good to us—little did we expect that before time came to kill them we would have to move on several different parts of the front, nor did we think that two pigs could cause so much trouble.

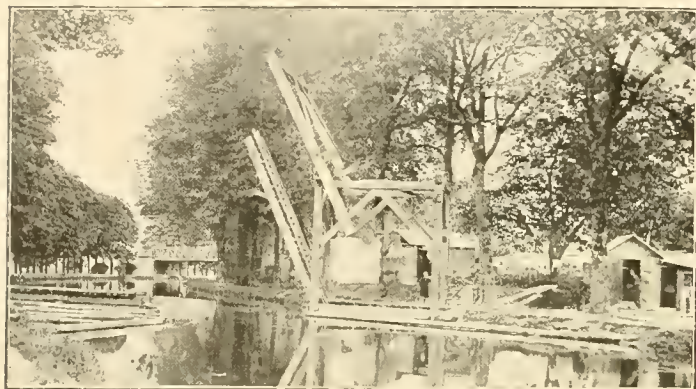
We had for a long time a stable sergeant in the company and had often wondered what the idea was of having a stable sergeant when we had no stables. But here, at last, was a job for him: that of official caretaker of the hogs. The first time most members of the company came in contact with the hogs was one Sunday morning. We were all lined up in company front and "Hairbreadth Harry" broke the news to us that some members of the company had erected a hog pen on the other side of the railroad, and as the ground rent had come due and that the owner was trying to charge us excessive rent: therefore, we would pick up the hog pen and carry it over into our own back yard.

In August we moved to Belleville and the hogs were moved along. They had now become quite big, also quite troublesome. The stable sergeant did not have much success in enforcing discipline, it was impossible to keep them confined to quarters and every time the sergeant would check up their quarters he would find the pigs A. W. O. L. Then a searching party was detailed to round them up. Here again we were impressed with the fact that the sergeant had not succeeded in enforcing much discipline in his squad; they would do squads right or left as the notion struck them. If you got too close they would do double time; if you got them surrounded they would charge, and when you finally got them halted you could not get them started again; perhaps due to the fact that they belonged to the engineers, they would get out and occasionally dig up a Frenchman's potato patch.

In the fall we moved to Cheppy in the Argonne. A pen was built on a "soixante" car and the hogs were loaded in. They had now become quite fat and lazy and caused very little trouble. Finally, in the latter part of November, the day before we moved to Conflans, the pigs were sentenced to be shot at sunrise. A firing squad was picked from the company who, after using several rounds of ammunition, at last got their victims in the vital spot, and the death penalty was paid for the many and various crimes committed. The company butchers embalmed and dressed them the next day, and after lying in state, their bodies

were borne to Conflans aboard a four-wheel drive truck.

They had stood the effects of Boche bombs, shells and gas: also many a mess of Kirby stew, but had at last fallen by the designing hand of some of the members of the company to which they belonged. At Conflans we had our first taste of their precious flesh in the shape of roast pork.



Narrow Gauge Bridge at Froid (Meuse)

The next day we moved to Longuyon, here the balance of their precious patriotic flesh was disgraced by being mixed with Boche sauerkraut in the shape of pork and sauerkraut.

Thus ended the career of our two army hogs.

## LIAISON WITH THE FRENCH ARTILLERY

*By Private A. G. Winkler, Company E*

With "boucoup" gas shells and others dropping around, there is only two things to do—jump into some ditch, which is probably full of water, barb wire or thorns, or run into a dugout, which may be full of rats or cooties. But the latter is not always available on short notice, so you usually fall into anything that looks like a hole.

I remember one instance when we were moving some big guns up through the St. Jean Canyon in sight of an observation balloon of "Le Boche." The engineer called my attention by a short sound on his klaxon, which is used on such occasions. Just about the time when "Old Ed," the engineer, was about to express his opinion of the balloon I heard a sound whiz-z-z-z, bang! Well, we had to execute a right-by-file and a left-front-into-line and go into a hole. But that was not all that Fritz sent over. One after another for at least two hours with some gas and more gas. Of course, it got more and more disagreeable in the small dugout, and occasionally we would take a peep out to see if he had made a direct hit. No, he had not, but he caused us to be delayed by shooting out a section of track.

By that time I began to look for a better place in case he took the same notion to stop the huge monster from being put into position, but while an American aviator kept the balloon down, we proceeded to put the first "G. I. cannon" into place. But Fritz kept up his shelling intermittently, and between falling into the dugouts and falling into the ditches and making our manoeuvres, we were pretty busy.

For three days we had to continue hauling the huge guns. On the 7th day of September, when all the aviators from Toul and every other place, held conversation, cut capers in the air and went "over the top" to see what Fritz

was doing, we decided that while they were going over it would be an opportune time to place our last "blunderbuss" into position. We finished placing all the guns in their respective positions, and then proceeded to haul some "G. I. cans" and small arms ammunition. Of course, it was not pleasant riding on a car of high explosive shells with Fritz pounding at an object some place where we were likely to pass. There was nothing to shut off his view but small undergrowth. At times it looked mighty dangerous to move either way. I have seen quite a few men that did not fear the Germans—that is, after they were captured.

## THE HOMESICK BUCK

*By Master Engineer Wilkinson, 21st Engineers*

I'm sick and I'm tired of the army,  
I'm sick and tired of the grub,  
I'm sick of the life, the war and the strife,  
And all of its silly flubdub.

I've stuck with the pick and shovel,  
I've wallowed around as K. P.,  
I've seen all the life at the end of a rifle,  
And I'm sick, oh, sick as can be.

I've got out on cold wintry morns,  
When the bugle sang out reveille,  
I've hunted at night with pale candle light,  
When the cooties were having a spree.

All my blankets are gritty and dirty,  
My face is all wrinkled and tanned,  
I've worked and shirked where the easy jobs lurked,  
And I never could get into the band.

I've been where the mud was thickest,  
I've lived in the pup tent and mire,  
I've been wet, and I've ate all the dirt I have met,  
I've been freezing without any fire.

I've tamped ties till my hands were all blistered,  
I've tramped on till my feet were on fire,  
I've carried steel rails and wire by bales,  
And just now I wish I could retire.

I'm sick of parlez-vous lingo,  
I'm sick of them playing the hog,  
They can have all the francs to fill their banks,  
If they'll let me return to my own sod.

For I want to get back to God's country,  
The Liberty Statue for me,  
I'll shake every hand I can when I land,  
And I'll be as happy as only a soldier can be.

I'll sit by the fire and I'll linger  
With the sweetest girl on the pike,  
I'll sleep in a bed with lily white spread,  
I'll only get up when I like.

I hear the recall a blowing,  
Some day it will cease to be fun,  
And when I get out, I tell you, old scout,  
If they want me, they sure must run.

## MUTT AND JEFF, THE TAILORS

*By W. A. Stone*

Two young lads with foreign accent approached a recruiting officer and said: "Us two want to enlist the army." "What's that?" he barked at the young men, whose hearts were bursting with patriotism. "Me and mine friend, Riska, want to go to war." "Well, what dyah wana join?" asked the recruiting salesman. "What have you got?" asked our friends. "Well, what can you do?" "We is tailors, me and Riska." "By gosh, you are just the men we want for the 21st Engineers."



Our fighting tailors, Jerry and Riska, came to camp to mend our clothes and sew our buttons just like mother once did. To fit them for their jobs they were put through the I. D. R. and then they came to France with the 21st Engineers, where they were further instructed in the usages of a pick and shovel.

After numerous trials we landed at Sorey, where we gritted our teeth and set to work. We were now several months away from mother, our clothes began to show signs of wear hence our friends were called upon to open a tailor shop. With little or no material and two old tractors which were used for sewing machines, Jerry and Riska opened the clothing maintenance department in April, 1918, in the regimental supply house. The shop was too short in both dimensions and the stove was more suitable for hot cakes than pressing irons, but our heroes "hit the ball" and kept us in the height of fashion. On the walls were the latest fashion plates cut from *La Vie Parisienne*.

The only place where the officers had to get in line with the bucks was at the tailor shop. But in spite of our democratic friends the bucks accused them of partiality to the officers and the officers accused them of not being partial, so Jerry and Riska had their troubles.

The tailor shop reminded one of the corner grocery. It was here that all the modern topics were discussed and the war settled. One sunny afternoon a few German planes opened their tail gates and unloaded a few bombs. It took a few days to gather up the equipment as Jerry "high tailed" and did not stop until he reached Commercy, and Riska found his shears at Chaumont. Every bunch that went on leave called to have their clothes pressed and service stripes put on, but when Major Pugh wanted a coat made out of a pair of pants they revolted. They made suits for all the adopted children and when a nurse from Mobile Hospital No. 39 sent her dress down for repairs it promoted curiosity throughout the Toul sector. One man came in to have his shoes sewed and the next to be deloused, but the fighting tailors met and repulsed all these raids. But the war at Sorey for Jerry and Riska was not so bad. There was lots of beer in town and plenty of jam in the warehouse.

Then we moved to the Argonne and our heroes set themselves up in a tin shack and domiciled in a box car with other unwelcome live stock. The Argonne kept us busy and we did not bother with our clothes so our tailors stood guard to kill time if not the Germans. Then came the order from the First Army to wear the "A" insignia and they got busy again. They cut out "A's" and sewed them on the sleeves of half the regiment. Then came the armistice and work piled in again. Major Banks sent his orderly with his suit while he laid in bed waiting for it. The war for Jerry and Riska had just begun.

We moved to Conflans, where an elaborate shop was established and mirrors and furniture were salvaged and they set to work with a vengeance. Many people at Conflans spoke German and the tailors were in their glory. They courted the young lady across the street, but Captain Mansfield proved a better Romeo.

Many suits were brought in in the usual manner, especially the officers. When one day the serenity of the shop was disturbed by the M. P.'s, who hauled Jerry and Riska to the Provost Marshal, and questioned as to how many salvaged officers' uniforms they had. Poor fellows, they knew nothing of the stolen uniforms which were taken from a box car in the yard by some unscrupulous persons. After being deloused they were released for a few days

when they were again given the third degree which resulted in fifteen days in the "hoosgow," where they performed all sorts of pleasant tasks, and were given an orderly, who followed them around with a gun to keep curious people away. And In-bad-the-Tailors are awaiting courtmartial and the First and Second Battalions are leaving, so they are again doing their bit to send us home in good clothes and spirit.

In some future day we will see a sign over a tailor shop, "MUTT AND JEFF, THE TAILORS," and we'll go in and talk about the next war and how we won the last.

## THE SECOND SQUAD AT ANANCY

*By Corporal Fred L. Baker, Company B*

On December 3rd, while Company B was stationed at Longuyon, we were told to take rations and tools to clean up the Anancy yards, repair the track and other necessary work there to put the railroad in good condition.

Upon our arrival at Anancy we took the day off to salvage lamps, stoves, beds and other things to furnish our shack, so as to make ourselves comfortable and we decided to appoint Gennett as chief cook, which pleased him very much. Logue walked track toward Spincourt while King walked to Longuyon. The remainder of the boys put in their time working around the yards and cleaning up around the station. Each day one of the boys acted as K. P., cut wood and carried water.

We were considered a curiosity by the French civilians as very few Americans had been billeted there before our arrival. But after a day or so the civilians came down to visit us, inviting us to their homes and tried in every way possible to make us feel welcome, although we had some trying experiences, as none of us could speak French except to say "oui" and "pas compris." However, we learned a great deal in a few days' time, with the kind assistance of several Mademoiselles. It was very amusing to see us studying and trying to talk with them. I assure you we will never forget the young ladies who were so kind and patient and tried to teach us what they knew. Every time we went visiting the old folks would make coffee for us, which we always appreciated.



*Narrow Gauge at Sauvoy*

There was no danger of any of the officers coming up and finding us idle or away from the work, because we had a stand in with the operators who were working there. Every time there was a speeder reported in the block the man on duty would come out and give the alarm, "hot rail." Everything was running nicely until Captain Minor

came to make an inspection and found something which did not suit him. He proceeded to give us a lecture. We have not forgotten it.

During the holidays six more men were sent to assist in the work and had to take charge of one of the switch shanties. That made less work for the rest of us, so we



*Metz*

proceeded to have a great time during Christmas and New Year's.

There was one dark Monday morning for us when a detachment of the 219th French Cavalry was billeted at Anancy and another detachment over at Pierrepont. They gave a concert at Anancy and followed it with a dance Sunday afternoon at Anancy and at Pierrepont that night. We attended the dance at Anancy and just as soon as we could eat supper we started on the five kilometer hike to Pierrepont. It was early in the morning when we arrived home, but we had enough pleasure to make up for our tired feelings, and every man went to work the next morning feeling very badly, but glad that he had gone. Soon afterward the French soldiers left for other parts of France. We bid each and every one "Au revoir et bon sante." Then we settled down to our work and tried to forget our holiday pleasures. It seemed very lonesome for a while, but that is the old army game. The best of friends must part.

It was amusing to see how we tried to keep each other ignorant of our whereabouts when we went visiting. Some would visit at Beuville, others at Pierrepont; two would go to Han occasionally, while the rest would split up around town. It seemed that all of us were jealous of the other fellow. The darkest day of all was when we received a telephone message telling us to pack up and be ready to return to the company at Spincourt. Of course, we were expecting to have to move, but had thought that we would have more time after being notified. But like all "good soldiers" we were equal to the task and were ready in about thirty minutes with bag and pack.

Then came the time to say good-bye to our friends. Where we had figured on spending a few minutes with each one, we only had time to go in and come right away. Then there were some we did not get to see. We have the consolation of knowing that if we ever have a chance to get back up there we will receive a warm welcome and always find the latch string hanging on the outside.

## ABAINVILLE TO SORCY VIA LIGHT RAILWAY

*By Sergeant F. C. Lowman*

Lieutenant Charles D. Darragh, commanding officer of Company O of the 21st Engineers, had been appointed superintendent of the A. S. lines. The personnel of this company having been assigned to various duties along the line, it became necessary that they become acquainted with the route. This knowledge was acquired through the valuable assistance of an escort who accompanied us over the road.

Ordinarily the Government does not provide coaches with which we could execute our tours of inspection and otherwise. In the face of this inconvenience our superintendent commandeered a captured German coach which served the purpose exactly.

The division under our control, approximately twenty-seven kilometers in length, includes in its course several abrupt curves and steep inclines. AS-1 is located at Abainville and terminates at AS-27, near the village of Sorcy.

We depart from AS-1 at 8.37 o'clock and glide around three or four curves, down a long sloping hill, under the standard gauge French railway and across a winding stream of water. Climbing another hill, we speed onto level, rolling country and from this point we can vividly discern our Abainville camp with its many shops and expansive railroad yards. En route we witness rolling hills, beautiful pine groves, velvety green meadows and long, narrow lanes, resembling elongated streams of white ribbon. Approaching AS-2, a little French village with its quaint red colored housetops, presents itself to view. This, as countless other villages, is nestled in the embraces of protecting hills which adds an air of solemn seclusion.

We now commence to coast down and around many curves and apply our brakes to stop at AS-3. The superintendent alights to conduct a general inspection of station and living quarters. This station, similar to several small way stations of our home country, stands conspicuously alone.

A whistling signal and we are on our way, bound for AS-7. The land is fairly level between AS-3 and AS-7, which facilitates traveling. AS-7 is obsolete and impres-



*Metz*

sively deserted. On we proceed to AS-9, where we halt to make inspection and discover that everything is in splendid condition.

AS-11 is our next move, and here we experience tiresome delay caused by the incoming trains laden with salvage and empty shell cases. This proves to be a very active



center. We stealthily procure a few of the shells for souvenir purposes, which we mail home for remembrances of dear France. Here at AS-11 we encounter the Meuse-Seine Canal, the longest and most important canal in France. The water flows with sparkling clearness and with its accompanying mule ridden tow path presents a pleasing spectacle.

On the opposite side of us is a road bearing the almost ceaseless traffic of motor vehicles of every description and steady streams of military wagons and marching groups of weary soldiers. Our attention is drawn to several groups of green-garbed German prisoners, who are distributed along the road making repairs, extensions and improvements to the much abused highways. They are distinguished by the large letters "P. W." on the back of their coats and but one solitary American guard stands guard over fifty or more of these prisoners. The humane treatment accorded them by us and their contentment while in our custody does not necessitate severe and binding restrictions.

The surrounding country becomes more picturesque. The historical French wood carriers cut the brush and hew small trees for kindling. Coal is almost unknown in some sections and the wood is bound together into bundles and carried by the peasant farmers to their homes. The law of conservation has been cheerfully adhered to by the French people and untold hardships and discomforts have been suffered without complaint.

Occasionally, we notice a lock in the canal which is operated by the keeper, generally an aged Frenchman and his family. His home is situated within a convenient distance from the lock.

AS-15 is an ideal station. The boys have their domiciles on the canal bank and two large trees, one on either side, afford shelter from violent wind and rainstorms.

At AS-22 we cross the drawbridge across the canal and forsake the automobile road. AS-23 becomes visible almost immediately after pulling out of AS-22.

We hesitate at AS-27 to make an inspection, inquire as to living conditions and the quality and quantity of food available. Here everything is found satisfactory and we proceed to Sorey.

Shortly after leaving AS-27, an automobile roadway crosses a bridge over the canal. The French standard gauge railroad crosses under the road and over the canal

strength and a few cuss words we managed to restore the car and in about ten minutes were on our journey.

This trip added a keen edge to our appetites and after making necessary arrangements at Sorey we partook of a very appetizing dinner. After doing justice to the roast beef, tomatoes, browned potatoes and good hot coffee we



*Looking Down the River Toward Deutsches Tor (Metz)*

decided to give the city of Sorey the critical once over. The sights impressed us favorably, and on our journey home we noticed another group of Jerry prisoners sorting salvage clothing real industriously.

One sight of particular interest was the long, level train of American Red Cross ambulance coaches. The exterior was very characteristic of American ingenuity and could be distinguished from all others by the strength and neatness of appearance. The condition of the interior of the cars was far more commendable while order and cleanliness seemed to be their slogan.

Passing the canal while returning to Abainville we noticed the out of date methods they employed in transportation. Slow moving, work wearied horses and mules furnish the motive power, followed and urged on by a young girl or an aged Frenchman.

Being travel weary, we felt satisfied to take to the coach and in a reclining posture accepted the remaining time for relaxation and rest.

We arrived at Abainville at 3.35 p. m.

## METZ

In order to complete the list of locations of the 21st Engineers, the city of Metz, Lorraine, must be given mention. Headquarters detachment of the Fourth Battalion went to Metz on December 9, 1918, to be used as liaison between the Sous Commission de Reseau at that place and the 21st operating offices at Conflans.

Upon entering the city it was found to be in the patriotic dress of the Allies, the streets lined with temporary poles for this purpose. Nearly every window displayed from one to several flags. Apparently the city was glad to return to French government.

In the heart of the city places here and there showed indications of having been the scenes of rioting mobs. Upon inquiry it was found that the French soldiers had taken matters into their own hands the previous night and broken into several German owned stores, taking various articles and throwing the others into the street at the disposal of the public. After the mob was dispersed, French guards were stationed at these places and no one was allowed to linger near the entrances.



*Hills around Metz*

and the A. S. line over all three. We are able to follow the course of the canal for a mile or more, running through an archway formed by the leaning trees, it is indeed a beautiful scene.

Our German coach refused to take the switch in the Sorey yards, which resulted in derailment. With speed,

Several statues of the kaiser and other German nobility had either been pulled over or blown to pieces. In a short while French statues decorated the pedestals. The streets having German names were renamed in many cases after some allied general.

The greater percentage of the people used the German language, although the majority can speak French, but were not permitted to use it during the war. Those of Teutonic origin would not be known as French, but to all who were not German sympathizers, called themselves Lorrainers. They were very friendly with the Americans and always ready to praise them, while at the same time



*Destroyed Houses Near Round House (Metz)*

they denounced the French and English. This was taken by the more skeptical to be nothing but propaganda. One of our drivers who went into Metz on November 18th must have been among the first there, as he said that the people eyed him with curiosity, even approaching, taking hold of him and attempting conversation at the same time.

Metz suffered but little in the way of destruction. Many bombs had been dropped in the railroad yards near the roundhouse and some of the nearby residences destroyed. The station house and some of the military buildings showed marks of gunfire, probably from the machine guns of allied planes. According to the stories heard from some of the citizens, the allied planes, especially the American, were very daring. Flying low above the city, they dropped bombs at will and used machine guns. Aerial raids were announced by the sounding of a siren and the people hastened to bombproof cellars where it was necessary to remain some times as long as four hours.

The city is typical of the country and laid out along irregular lines. The buildings are constructed, almost without exception, of stone with tile roofs. Those of special interest are the railway station, post office and cathedral. The latter is of purely Gothic architecture throughout, and is one of the largest in France. The railway station and post office building are of heavy Romanesque style, both being of German construction. One of the most interesting structures is the so-called Deutsches Tor over a branch of the Moselle River north of the railway station. This is a fortified bridge, erected in the year 1445 A. D.

Metz was known to be one of the most strongly fortified cities in the contested territory, and the truth of this statement could not be doubted after making a trip through the forts. More or less distant on every side of the city are hills of no mean height and the forts are located among them. For the most part the fortifications consist of underground passages and compartments walled up with heavy masonry. Where the masonry outcrops numerous loopholes for rifles and machine guns are in evidence.

Where buildings are separate from the earth works, they are of heavy masonry with the customary loopholes. Where practical, the groups of fortifications are separated by deep, wide moats walled up as above mentioned. The place lacked the appearance of a real fort in that there was not a gun or piece of artillery to be seen, the Germans having evacuated everything mobile. At various points were located French sentinels who were the only signs of habitation.

After a few weeks the new government began to get things organized. The streets and public places which had been neglected were cleaned. All German owned or operated stores were advertised by a sign in the window and soldiers were not permitted to enter them. Arrangements were made for the German citizens to dispose of property and prepare for departure to Germany.

By February the effects of peace were quite noticeable. Commodities lowered in price, stores put in large stocks and the people in general showed signs of increasing prosperity. Although many people have left or will leave Metz, there will remain a good city and should grow under the stability of the French Government.

### THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT (RAILWAY) BRIGADE

Mud to the right of them,	Theirs not to argue why,
Mud to the left of them,	Theirs to make shovels fly,
Mud in front of them,	Picks to be slung on high,
Nature had blundered.	Dug the seven hundred.

### "OUR BOSOM FRIEND"

He took a thousand C. C. pills and wondered why he flew  
 Into a stinking old latrine as he was forced to do.  
 He sat upon an orifice for two nights and a day,  
 While nature took her own sweet course, her wayward, wilful way.

He realized then the benefit that's likely to accrue  
 To any pill consumer, such as he, or I, or you,  
 From carrying every second, neatly folded, neatly pressed,  
 The old brown toilet paper in his pocket, o'er his breast.

—ANON E. MOUS.

### AN ODE ON THE Y. M. C. A.

*By Lieut. A. C. Spurr*

When you're far far from home and it's colder than Nome,  
 And you've worked all day in the rain,  
 And you've worked in the bog till you're soggy and goey  
 And you feel like you're going insane;  
 You come out after mess and you are bound to confess  
 You're bluer than blueberry pie.  
 If you've got any sense, you'll beat it hence  
 And put in your time at the "Y."

You can sit there and write or there may be movies tonight,  
 Or somebody playing a rag;  
 You can chat with the mob and cuss out the job  
 And idly roll a fag.  
 There are some ladies coming, the conversation gets hummin',  
 About the concert that's to be;  
 Somebody starts a song and you're sure going strong  
 As you make your sortie.

The religion ain't forced till you think you've been horsed  
 Into coming in from the cold.  
 That triangled "SEC" don't fall on your neck and  
 Welcome you back to the fold.  
 He'll stick out his fin and welcome you in with a grin,  
 And ask you what he can do.  
 It ain't your rank or name or your part in the game,  
 He's making his greeting to you.

And the girls that come to play are sweet, pretty and gay  
 And make you love 'em, each every one;  
 They are charming, that's true, but what's that to you  
 If they're home folks and full of fun.  
 They're glad to meet the boys and to fill 'em with joys  
 By giving them the best they have to give;  
 So when this war is done and it's time to have our fun,  
 We'll thank those dears, correctly, if we live.





LARSON

## Athletics---21st Regiment, Engineers

Our programme of athletics was somewhat curtailed by existing inclement weather conditions. A prevailing shortage of athletic equipment, in conjunction with onrushing military events, interfered with our intended plans in this capacity. Consequently we were compelled to participate in those sports requiring the least amount of sporting goods, which invariably proved insufficient. Baseball proved to be paramount, while basketball, volley ball, football and quoit pitching afforded an all season routine of exercising and amusement. Throughout the regiment were men possessing rare athletic ability. The organization of this department was officially opened in January, 1919, and was perfected under the supervision of a regimental athletic officer. One officer from each company, in co-operation with a few selected non-commissioned officers, advanced the project to a high standard of efficiency. Hampered by unfavorable conditions, it was the policy to confine the sports to contests within the regiment, and to organize athletics best suited to conditions.

### FOOTBALL

When stationed at Camp Grant company football teams were organized. Here the groups of pigskin warriors were pitted against their rivals and much interest was centered in favorite teams and supporters wagered real money to accentuate their confidence as to the result of combat. Our Company A aggregation, after many close and hard-fought contests, won the honors of the regiment, and since have displayed championship form in games of the pigskin variety.

### BASEBALL

Pending our trip from Hoboken to Sorey athletics were suspended, but resumed with vigorous delight immediately upon our arrival at this village. In the early spring season, almost before the earth shed its winter's burden of frost, baseball was introduced with much gusto. The French populace, particularly the younger folk, took great interest in our national game and after becoming more intimately acquainted with the rudiments of the sport, often times waxed enthusiastic and applauded us for executing sensational plays. Spirited rivalry prevailed between the different company teams and added zest to every contest. As our interest in this sport predominated, the baseball season was extended, by common consent, into late summer. The pennant deciding games were booked for July 4th. The aspiring teams crossed bats on Sorey field and every play was applauded by the many supporters. The players spared no energy in their determination to win which resulted in plays, speedy and phenomenal. Considerable money changed hands when the result awarded the championship to Company B.

### BASKETBALL

In order to make the basketball schedule short and snappy, and at the same time using no unfair methods, the eleven teams of the regiment were included in three leagues. A hall was constructed at Spincourt and a cage was provided for at the Y. M. C. A. Building in Jarny. The various teams were permitted to practise previous to engagement. The hearty co-operation of the Y. M. C. A. athletic director of this district was a factor in procuring the equipment and in making this sport a success. A keen competition for

honors excited much interest. Company A as a result of its remarkable team work, almost incredible speed in passing the ball and their consistent accuracy in tossing baskets, proved to be the best aggregation of our regiment.

### BOXING

The pugs of our regiment were so busily occupied operating trains, working in the shops or attending to their love affairs that they found but little time for training. Therefore, our regiment kept their candle of boxing celebrities under the bushel basket. Not inferring that we did not possess the fighting material. We had men who modestly admitted that they could beat up a battalion of Huns with one hand tied behind their backs and blindfolded. However, we staged a few exhibition fights for a tryout. Participants wielded the mits with no lack of speed or punch and on numerous occasions the haymaker was much in evidence. Although we had no world beaters, we upheld the good reputation of the 21st against boxers of several other organizations.

### TRACK MEETS

Track and field sports were planned because, although out of season, they required little equipment and could be conducted on the country roads, which were about the

only passable parts of muddy France. A quarter-mile track and jumping pits were constructed on the large parade grounds of the Caserne de Geslin and all preparations were made for the initial meet. The day selected was bleak and cloudy and with the ground covered with a three-inch fall of snow and sleet, furnished a novel setting for a field day. However, the boys were undaunted and six companies were fittingly represented for the comprising events.

In conclusion, it is well that we bring to light the headquarters free-for-all fight. Here is where several of the muscle-bound, swivel-chair heroes exhibited their superb quality of courage and fearlessness. On this momentous occasion Sergeant-Major Bard was awarded his unofficial wound chevron as the result of a much abused nose. Sergeant-Major Donnicker, after surviving until the last, tossed the sponge in in surrender. Many of the contestants limped, moaned and complained from inflicted abuse, while several submitted themselves for iodine applications.

It may be truthfully said that we had in our personnel of brawn and muscle many Mexican athletes, as far as throwing the bull is concerned, but we also took advantage of our spare moments by indulging in those sports which develop muscular strength and endurance, one factor on which the success or failure of a great army depends.

## Entertainment

Entertainment? Well, yes, we absorbed oodles of that commodity which was verified by our facial contortion in smiles, grins, cheers and laughter. To prevent chagrin and embarrassment to the joker, we oftentimes mustered a wrinkled ridden face of artificial smiles to convey our so-called appreciation. The hunk hermits almost nightly would clamp their floating ribs in hysterical laughter, while the dizzy comedians would impose upon us their mildewed conundrums and jokes of ancient birth. Keen wit was at a premium and the majority of witticisms might have originated at the time Noah added the he and she cat to his personnel for the excursion on his handmade barge. Light spirited repartee was rationed to us in over-liberal quantities, and often bore the copyright of Methusalem's grandparents. Struggling in the futile attempt of deciphering the complicated methods of French railroading and committing manslaughter upon the French lingo was not as painful as amusing. The bugler's anthem, "Recall," with its magnetizing strains, had a never failing tendency to corral the blue-denimed pick and shovel warriors back to the rendezvous where bull proved to be the most prominent character of the arena. Although the gloom dispelling jokes of the most modern type were unmercifully abused, they added a cheerful atmosphere to the military routine of battling with mud and slim proportioned railroads.

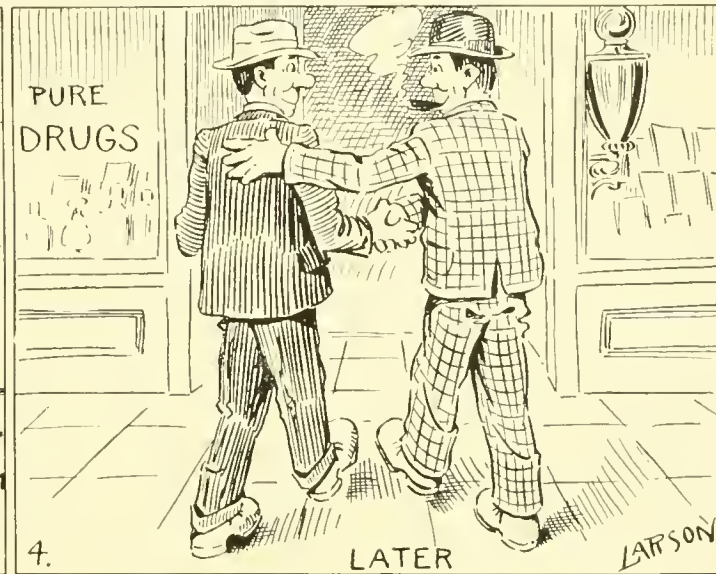
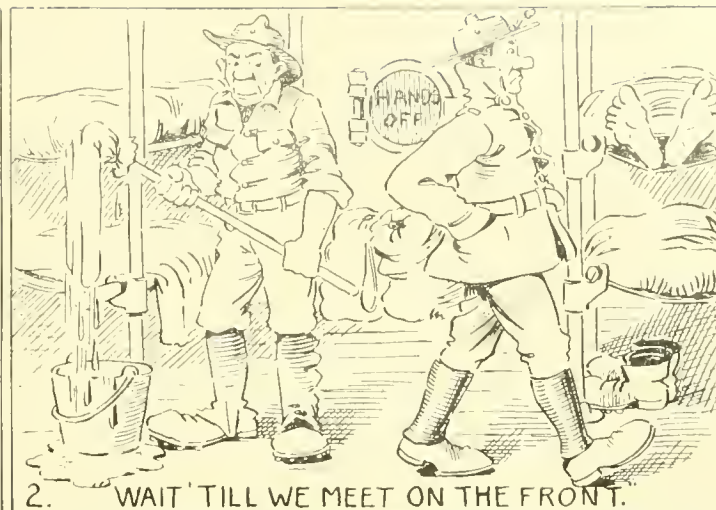
Our Independence Day celebration of July 4, 1918, was the most successful presentation of amusement in the history of our regiment. This great national holiday was befittingly celebrated throughout all France, and the natives in their gracious spirit of brotherhood, generously assisted us in making the day a grand success. Our officers exercised their every effort in this cause and the men throughout the entire regiment devoted all in their power to

make this day replete with joy and gladness. A more perfect rendezvous could not have been desired than that selected by the officiating members. A grass-covered field of velvety verdure, as level and spacious as though presented by nature for this particular occasion. Nestled in the embraces of the surrounding hills, the meadows extended to the quaint old village of Sorey. Looming within distinct vision were the villages of Trousey and Vertuzey, the silent moving water of the winding canal and the sloping hills dotted here and there with army camps and farm houses. The early morn of this eventful day broke perfectly clear and cloudless and the picturesque countryside shone with dazzling brilliance from the wealth of glorious sunshine.

Regardless of whistles, bells or bugles, we arose at an uncommonly early hour and our hearts beat faster with joyful anticipation. Nearing the time for our introducing events, a group of fleecy clouds flavored the atmosphere with a balmy and refreshing air.

Many of our boys, who were distributed over a territory of considerable radius, were transported to Sorey over the narrow gauge railroad and through the thoughtfulness of our colonel ample accommodations were arranged for all those wishing to attend. We were pleasantly surprised to see that the festivities were not confined to Americans only. Hundreds of the village inhabitants, attired in their very best and with cheerful hearts, rejoiced in this opportunity of witnessing a spectacle heretofore unknown in France. Troups of happy children in jubilant spirit danced about, waving American flags. From adjoining villages the more elderly folk eagerly wended their way toward the scene of merriment and displayed a hearty interest in the proceedings. To the younger men and women in attendance, the





programme was less confusing and they vigorously gained their desired position to watch in minute detail the unfamiliar sports and contests. The regimental band rendered commendable selections and added a patriotic air to the programme. The entire audience and participants were abounding in gayety and after the musicians filled the air with their resonant melody, merry cheers and laughter signified the commencement of this memorable Franco-American festival.

The most amusing component of our program, especially to the strangers in attendance, was the tug of war. In the finals Company A matched their physical strength against the brawn of Company B. A white handkerchief was tied on the center of the long, thick rope and the teams took their respective positions. The game proved to be a novelty to our French comrades and they could not realize why the energetic and enterprising American would adopt this crude method of tearing a rope. The contest resulted in a victory for Company A, and each contending member of the winning team was awarded a pocket medal reproduced from a two-franc silver piece.

A relay race in which every company was represented by their very best cinder path artists was an event of much importance. The assigned distance of 800 yards was covered with admirable speed, although the contestants suffered the handicap of wearing hobnail shoes.

To many of us it seemed quite ridiculous to see our stalwart Yanks indulge in the popular pastime, the potato race. Although almost invariably devoted to the

weaker sex, the boys with Yankee determination transferred those potatoes to the sack with incredible speed and skill.

Next came the contest which was most delightful to our French comrades, the cock fight. The object of this sport is easily comprehended and onlookers went frantic with joy. It convinced them of the courage and daring of the American soldier and the outcome was so extremely amusing that it brought tears of joy to their eyes.

Then we had a mirth provoking clown. This individual, in his hair-raising balancing act, held his audience spellbound. His funny capers and daring manoeuvres, his side-splitting humor and ridiculous attire held the French



*Regimental Orchestra*





enthusiasts in a tumult of laughter from start to finish. They repeatedly begged for an encore, but our programme, which demanded every minute of the day, compelled us to execute the comprising events orderly and hastily.

Baseball, our national pastime, excited the most interest in the Yanks, and the games proved to be closely contested. Here various company teams crossed bats for superiority and were heartily encouraged by their many supporters.

Although the rudiments of the game were a novelty to the French attendants, they clambered to the side lines and frequently crossed the restricted line to obtain a close view of the fleet footed Sammies. The strangers to the game gaped in rapt bewilderment at the speed, strength and endurance required in this sport and the catcher's regalia seemed to arouse their curiosity. They watched with mingled joy and confusion the shining sphere spinning through the air and often wondered if what the umpire said was true. They readily understood why the batter ran after hitting the ball, but why did he run when the ball hit him? Although three thousand miles from its home, this game was exhibited in pure American style, considering the absence of peanuts and pop bottles.

A large tarpaulin covered with several O. D. blankets was spread over the hard, rough boards of the boxing ring and we proceeded with the wrestling matches, though we had extremely few men trained in this art. The onlookers were satisfactorily entertained by the various manoeuvrings of the wrestlers. The rug coverings were removed and boxing succeeded the wrestling matches. A majority of the regimental pugs were engaged in these matches, and several were so unevenly matched that amusement took the place of excitement.

The appetites of the spectators, as well as those actively engaged, were keenly sharpened. Our various company cooks and faithful kitchen police had prepared for this and sure served us in remarkably good style. Sandwiches of tasty meats and flakey white bread were nutritious and to the Frenchman's cultivated taste for coarse brown war bread this was indeed a treat of gratuitous luxury. The doughnuts, a perfect product of gastronomy, were relished in silent appreciation and personal care was exercised to please our peasant guests. A generous issue of refreshing lemonade added pleasing qualities to our repast and every one indulged to their desire.

Throughout the entire afternoon the crowd maintained a cheerful spirit and the musical program kept every one



people not only cemented our bond of friendship but convinced them without the shadow of a doubt of the kind and benevolent American spirit.

While athletics and personally inflicted humor constituted the greater portion of our entertainment, we feel deeply indebted to the Y. M. C. A. for their efforts in our behalf. The various troupes of merrymakers representing the many overseas divisions did remarkably well in scattering productions of the twentieth century era of jokedom, which were highly appreciated and in merry glee were often applied to the khaki clads, especially our gold barred species. Their stage settings and curtain scenery were much admired by a few of our canvas sharks burdened with a knowledge of art, but to the most of us it presented nothing but a sinful waste of perfectly good paint.

With a hurried collection of the regimental theatrical talent we staged an impromptu minstrel show and the blackfaced comedians sure filled the bill. Their production convinced us that levity and wisdom can link arms without a disastrous effect. All seats, owing to the manager's foresight, were substantially fastened to the floor and the actors made their exit in absolute safety. The boys, sympathetically inspired, pronounced the performance a howling success and with maddening applause, profusely rendered, encouraged the second appearance of these joy provokers. This semi-circular assemblage of fire-tongued wits comprised the most capable product of the regimental foolish factory. Their outburst of minstrel glory and scintillating humor astonished their most skeptical comrades and added new lustre to the fame of the fighting 21st. From the presentation to the grand finale and from interlocutor both ways, it was equally as elaborate as it was complete. The participants, recognizing the need of their brothers in arms, devoted every energy to prevent our brains from warping, and for a brief moment, forgetful of military dignity, favored us with burlesque comedy generously spiced with side-splitting ditties. Our orchestra, known more readily as the canned noise department, rendered soft and pleasing selections and the audience responded with vociferous applause. The regimental band peddled their product in a more boisterous manner and even discords, to our undetecting ears, was enrapturing melody.

On numerous occasions several of our prodigies volunteered to unbosom themselves of jokes and stories and through their efforts we were often reminded of stories aged, and infirm and weatherbeaten jokes sporting chin



*Troop Train on the Sorey-Cornieville Line*

alive and inspired with joy. The evening approached and the sun was nearing the western horizon. The silhouettes of our grateful friends slowly disappearing in the distance and the beauty of the setting sun casting its parting rays over the well cultivated fields of Sorey was the glorious end of a perfect day. Our kind consideration for the French

whiskers. Forsaking our regular chow line and visiting a restaurant to partake of dinner, replete and equally as palatable as it was edible, caused us much pleasure and satisfaction, if not entertainment.

Our first Christmas Day in France developed into the most memorable yuletide festivities during our military



*Pupils and Professor, Public School at Jarney*

life on foreign soil. The signing of the armistice and the cessation of hostilities tended to ease our heartbeats. In Conflans, peaceful and solemn, we conducted our Christmas festival, which heaped upon our memory cherished recollections of our former ones at home. Elaborate arrangements were made and through the conscientious efforts of Chaplain Little and Master Engineer William I. Garren, in conjunction with the volunteered service of our boys and the Y. M. C. A., this event bore a fruitful harvest. Our principal motive was to entertain the war stricken children of this community and to present Christmas gifts to those who had been deprived of the brighter things of life. Oranges, cakes, candy and cookies were procured after

much difficulty and our regimental cooks prepared dainties and hot chocolate to feed their hungry stomachs. Our orchestra favored the audience with a pleasing concert which was accompanied by Christmas carols rendered by the children. Small packages were distributed to the older folk, as well as to the children, and their appreciation and thankfulness was expressed in their silent admiration.

To us it was the blessedness of giving, and to the needy children 'twas the joy of receiving.

The full value of our benevolence may be realized only in retrospect, but their smiles of gratitude will long linger in our memory as a duty well done.

It would be unfair to overlook the cinema, or moving picture shows. Up-to-date films flashed on the screen before our very eyes conveyed to us the latest events transpiring in the United States. This was indeed very educating and instructive, and we were kept in constant touch with our military progress at home.

Entertainment proved to be the chief factor in maintaining and strengthening the morale of the troops and during hostilities furnished welcome diversion, relieved the monotony of army life, thereby adding considerably toward our wealth of efficiency.

The ludicrous nature of abounding rumors afforded much amusement and the army as a producer of perpetual gossip has long since triumphed over the feminine claimed superiority. Predictions as to the date of our homeward sailing are dealt, ad lib, to listening ears, and though they seldom eventuate, they afford amusement, confused with uncertainty.

Bidding au revoir to France and sailing back to the sweet land of liberty, the good old U. S. A., will surmount all these joyful moments and will be, without question, the climax of this great career.

## My Experience as a Prisoner

By Lester P. Smith, Company B, 21st Engineers

This epistle dates from October 3, 1918, at which time I was captured, to December 10, 1919, when I was turned over to the American authorities at Morchingen.

I was captured with Henry Oliphant, between Beney and Dommartin, on October 3rd at 9 a. m. Private Oliphant and I, members of the noted shock troops of the 21st Engineers, were sent out to look over a branch of the narrow gauge railway lines in that vicinity for the purpose of determining its condition for service and amount of repairs necessary. This repair work to be done as soon as the infantry made the next advance.

We left our company that morning unarmed and proceeded along the highway to Beney and thence to the right till we came to where the narrow gauge crossed the road. We then followed the railway to the right across an open field and then into the woods. We saw but few soldiers after we left the highway, and most of them were at the point where we entered these woods. As we neared the other edge of these woods things looked different to me, but did not impress me as being our front line. At the point where we left these woods the narrow gauge line ran parallel to a standard gauge line and was in such good condition that we thought the Huns had evacuated the



*Boche Transport Destroyed by American Shell Fire*

sector. We proceeded across this open space, which was about four hundred yards, toward another stretch of woods. We stopped several times while crossing this field, which was nearly as level as a billiard table, and looked over a few dead soldiers, including one American officer. This aroused my suspicion of where we might be, but Oliphant



assured me that our front line was some distance ahead of us. About three minutes later, when we came to the edge of these woods, we were suddenly halted by four Germans armed with rifles and pistols. They made us understand what we were to do or what they would do with us. They did, however, give us plenty of time to make up our minds, which resulted in our being taken prisoner. We were in a helpless position with no arms and a level field back of us which made escape impossible. They took us about twenty-five or thirty yards to a shanty and dugout where there were more German soldiers, some thirty in number.

At this point Oliphant and I decided that it was our last chance for life, and that by making an escape. Oliphant moved away from me about twenty-five feet and gave me the word that he was leaving on short notice. We started in opposite directions. I had hardly got three steps before I was grabbed and my arms locked behind me. Oliphant got fifteen or twenty yards before they downed him with rifle fire. I did not see him after this, as they would not let me go back to where he was.

I was honored with three guards, one ahead of me and one in front of me and one behind me. They took me out of these woods and back to a dugout, where at that time I thought I was to be crucified and as I went down the steps I thought I was taking one last look above ground. However, I came out of there alive and none the worse for the wear except that I was getting very nervous. I could picture the future only as one round of misery. They took me from here to another dugout as if in search for someone to work on me physically. One officer relieved me of my raincoat and gloves and acted as if he would like to have had a piece of my hide for a souvenir.

From here I was escorted by only two guards and they proceeded to take me back of the lines, which gave me some relief, for the shell fire was not very agreeable where I was. They took me to a town by the name of Chambley and paraded me around the streets. From here they hiked through fields to some town that I was unable to learn the name of and turned me over to an intelligence officer a von of some sort.

This officer took me to a town in the vicinity of Metz, named Homecourt, by auto, where they tried to put me through the third degree. All the true information that they received from me was my name and organization,



*View in German Trenches*

which they took off my dog tag. From here a guard took me to Joeuf, a distance of about two kilometers, where he put me in a "jug" with six other Americans, after having been given a feed of soup and a small piece of black bread.

This "jug" was a dwelling house with a high wire fence around it. The house was very clean, but the rooms were

small and cold. The beds consisted of the floor as a bedstead and shavings for a mattress. We had no blankets to put over us, so I guess that it was a good thing that they crowded us in the rooms, for we could keep warm better. There was, however, a stove in the room, and when we did have a fire we had to steal the fuel.



*View in German Trenches*

I was not taken out to work for nearly two weeks, for I made them believe that I was sick. This, however, got to be an old story with them, and so one morning the guard took me down to the doctor. He pronounced me in healthy condition and told the guard to put me to work. Consequently at noon I joined the other boys in their work. The work that they had us doing most of the time was not hard work but was dirty. The hours of work were from 7 a. m. till 4.30 p. m., with an hour for dinner. The guards never beat any of us up, though I and several of the others had some close calls for refusing to do something that they wanted us to do.

Our food in this place was very poor and insufficient for the upkeep of our body. We had coffee for breakfast, soup for dinner, and coffee and bread for supper. We, however, did eat more than that, as the French people contributed to our needs very often and very liberally. We had to receive these contributions on the sly, as the Germans had given us strict orders not to receive anything from the French. The French civilians in the town were ordered not to give us anything. Several of the civilians were caught and were fined, but they did not do anything with us. We had a very hard time trying to get some soap and a towel. I had been in camp nearly two weeks before I even had a wash. Finally I succeeded in buying some soap from a German. A small piece for five marks, the equivalent of one American dollar. Thank God for the money I had when I was taken, as that and everything else was left on me. A prisoner and his money are soon parted, which was true in my case, and from then on I stole enough stuff and sold it to the Germans to buy a few articles.

On the fifth of November I, with several other prisoners, French, English, Italian and American, were moved back to the French prison camp located at Darmstadt. We traveled third class by way of Metz, Saarbrücken and Mainz. We were given a half a loaf of bread each for rations for the trip, which took two days. I felt as though I was starved before I got there.

On our arrival at camp we were greeted by the Red Cross. They gave us a big feed and promised us more in

the morning, which sure came true, for in the morning we received a box of food sufficient to feed us for ten days. The box also contained smoking tobacco and soap. This food ration continued throughout my stay, which gave me sufficient food.

There were thirty-two Americans there in the camp when I arrived. We were put in a barrack with about one hundred Englishmen and a few Scotchmen. The barrack was not very clean, but it was warm and I had a bunk to sleep in and blankets to put over me.

The Englishmen were not very healthy and a good many of them had died from diseases caused by poor food and unhealthy conditions. The Germans would not do as much for the English as they would for the Americans, and then they did not fight for their rights as much as we did.

We got along with the English very well and most of the Americans divided their food with them. Another fellow and I took one Welshman in. We furnished the food and he did the cooking for us and the stealing of the wood for the fire to do the cooking over. He was a kid about eighteen years old and had been a prisoner since last March, and had not been taken to a prison camp until September, but held back of the lines.

We knew that the Armistice was to be signed on November 11th and we sure were a happy bunch. We had no way of celebrating except by sitting up all night and talking about what we were going to do when we got home. The next morning the Germans informed us that there was a revolution in Darmstadt and that we must be quiet that day. But the next day we could not stand the solitude any longer so a few of us tore some boards off the fence and sneaked to town.

The civilians treated us very good but the soldiers gave

us the dog eye. They locked a few of the boys up but I managed to get back to camp unmolested. From then on we were permitted to go to town as long as we behaved ourselves but could not get out of town or get on to the railroad. The authorities notified us that we would have to take our turn in being shipped back, as there was nearly thirty thousand prisoners in the camp.

Our turn came on November 30th. They shipped us back with the English and a few of the French. We travelled third class by way of Worms and Saarbrücken to Forbach where we camped for two days in a German hospital building. We were supposed to go to Metz and there to be turned over to the American authorities but somehow the French got us off our course. December 2nd we proceeded to a town named Morchingen and were unloaded again and put in a German hospital building. We laid here five days shut inside a stone wall. It seemed as though we were never going to get into France but finally two Red Cross men with trucks came over from Nancy and took us to Toul.

We were placed in the hospital at Toul where I received a change of clothing. I sure needed that change for I was as lousy as a "pet coon."

On December 17th Captain Radford came to Toul and brought me back to the 21st Engineers.

In all my stay in German hands I never saw the Germans beat up an American but I did see them beat up French, English and Russians, and it would nearly make a person's blood run cold to stand by and see them do it. We often told our guards that it would not be best for them to ever try beating us up if they wanted to go home when the war was over.



*Regiment at Labry.*



# Capture

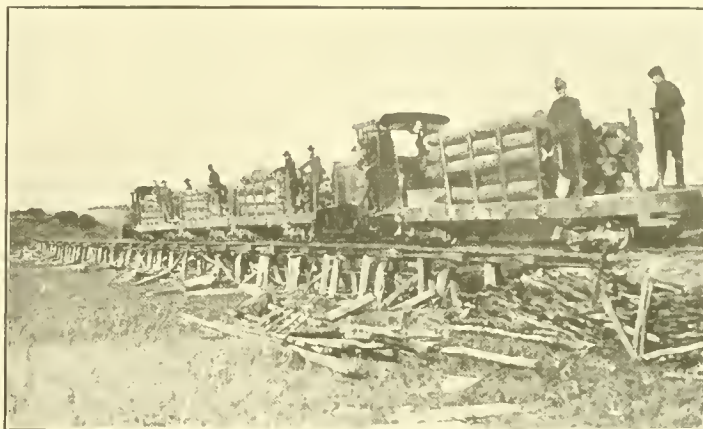
By Henry D. Oliphant

Preparatory to the St. Mihiel advance, six of us, forming one of the three similar groups, left the headquarters camp at Sorey early in the evening of September 11th, equipped with two gasoline "speeders." Thus began our active participation in the now famous St. Mihiel advance. Our entry, however, was not exactly auspicious. One of the vehicles developed trouble before we had gone very far. With optimistic faith in the impending disappearance of the trouble, we plugged ahead, pushing almost as much as we rode, and what a trip it was! The rain was coming down in torrents, the mud ankle deep all along the track, and where the track had been laid alongside of the highway the traffic of men, teams and trucks was so thick that progress was all but impossible.

We finally reached our objective—Ansauville. There we received our orders, and proceeded immediately to Flirey. It was our task to run a location line to connect the existing, American operated, 60 cm. railway with the existing, German abandoned, track of the same gauge. After the connection had been made, and part of the work incidental to transforming a temporary line into one more suitable for permanent operation had been accomplished, our real work started. This was to trace the various ex-German lines, report on their condition, as well as any supplies of materials, etc., we discovered, and to collect the data necessary to make the previously drawn observation maps as accurate as possible. It was in the course of carrying on this work that my experiences had their inception.

On the morning of October 3rd Justin P. Smith and I left the camp near Essey, where the crew was attached to B Company for rations. We were to report on the existing condition of two lines which crossed the Beney-St. Benoit road northwest of the former town, and were shown on the map as joining about a kilometer north of the road, the single line proceeding from there toward the front. We rode to Pannes in a truck, and from that point we walked. A few days previous to this, I had been on a similar expedition with Eng. Wadsworth. On our return

other party starting out was not as familiar with the territory assigned to them, led to their carrying the only available map. The second consideration led to our going without arms—we were not going to be in danger (we believed not at least).



*German Trestle across Swamp behind Mont Sec*

We started to trace the line where it crossed the road, as above mentioned, and came to the junction point without noticing any material damage. At this point we saw a group of doughboys, and from them inquired the distance to the "front." They told me it was about four kilometers. As we proceeded, we passed a small group of Yanks going back toward this junction. They were the last of our own men we saw. A short distance beyond this we emerged from the woods through which the line had run, and started across a clearing toward another wood which the line entered about 300 yards beyond. Here we found a number of places where the line had been damaged by artillery fire. As we walked across the clearing we noted that on the further side the ground apparently sloped away. As a generous right of way had been cleared through the woods, it was my idea that from this break we would be able to see far enough ahead to allow for our turning back. As we were about to turn back we undoubtedly received the biggest surprise of our lives. We had no reason to suppose that we were within a kilometer of our most advanced position: so when a voice from the side called "Halt!" we supposed it was one of our own guards. We turned and beheld a group of Germans. They had stepped out from among the trees and were but a few feet away, with rifles and automatics well trained on us. To even attempt resistance was useless. They had us outnumbered. And now we saw another weapon: a machine gun just beyond the edge of the brush. Realizing the futility of attempting to escape right then, we decided to start back as they ordered us to. I can say "we decided" truthfully, for our conversation with each other brought no other act from them than motions for silence. And right here I might explain that it was due, undoubtedly, to our being unarmed that we owed being alive then. They had surely watched us advance across the clearing, and had we carried weapons they would not have allowed us to get clear across. It is with some pride that I can say that in spite of their command to do so we did not pull the movie stunt. We neither raised our hands over our heads, nor called "Kamerad."



*A gang of Gandy Danciers doing their Bit in building the petite Chemin De Fer that now extends along the entire front in France*

we had followed out a spur which led from the line going forward from Beney to the line that Smith and I were to trace. Thus I had a pretty fair idea of where we were to go, and approximately how far from the front we would be. The former consideration, combined with the fact that the

After a brief halt while they waited for a non-com, we were marched back under a strong guard to a couple of buildings. Here another delay occurred. We were in the midst of a large group—probably twenty-five or thirty men. Our chances for escape were diminishing each minute. So, after a brief conference with Smith, I decided to make the attempt. I was determined not to go to a prison camp, and there seemed but two alternatives: either get away or die in the attempt. By assuming apparent indifference, I was successful in edging around until I was between the major portion of the group and the house from which they had come. I don't think they had any idea that I would even dream of escaping. This was the only advantage I had. By making a sudden break I suc-

ceeded in getting the house between them and myself. I had accomplished the first step, and not a shot had been fired.

and looked me over. A group of medical men removed my blouse and applied first aid to both wounds. Another group started systematically through my pockets at the same time. The only thing they overlooked was my money, which was in a shirt pocket. After this, they loaded me in an improvised litter (a piece of canvas tied over a pole which two men carried on their shoulders) and carried me back to a dugout dressing station where my wounds were redressed by an officer, and an anti-tetanus injection given me.

While dressing me immediately after I was wounded, several of the men attempted to question me, and apparently made some very personal comments on my having attempted to escape. As none of them spoke more than a



*German Military Funeral (Metz)*

ceeded in getting the house between them and myself. I had accomplished the first step, and not a shot had been fired.

As this was the last I saw of Smith, my account from here will deal entirely with my own experiences.

Between the house and the clear space previously mentioned there was a narrow strip of woods. In our little trip we had paralleled the edge of the woods. Once through this strip I felt that I would be well started. But I didn't get through it. Just as I entered it from one side, two Germans entered it from the clearing. The brush was so thick we had each chosen the only trail near. Seeing me they raised their rifles. Hoping to possibly dodge their fire I immediately ducked to the right. And how fortunate it was that I did so. They were but thirty-five or forty feet away as they fired, yet neither bullet struck a vital part. One entered my left arm, just on a level with the heart, and the other barely touched me, inflicting a mere flesh wound in the side, just above the waist. The latter, however, while doing no serious damage, was sufficient to knock all the wind out of me so that I fell. My active participation in the war was ended.

Within a very few minutes a number of them came up

couple of words of English, I did not understand them, and said nothing. Here in the dug-out, though, one of the men spoke English fairly well. He explained that they all thought I was either an Englishman or a Canadian. After I had convinced them that I was an American, their interest in me increased. Numerous questions were asked, the one that came from most being, "Why did America come into the war?"

After a few hours in the dressing station I was put in an ambulance, horse drawn, and taken to a field hospital. Here my arm was set (the bullet had broken the bone) and an operation performed on my side. The doctors were anything but gentle, but their work was thorough.

That night I had my first German meal—a slice of black, soggy bread spread with bully beef and several cups of what they call coffee—I found afterwards it was roasted barley. Breakfast was a duplication of supper, and later in the morning I was put in a motor ambulance and taken to an evacuation hospital in or near Briey.

Here the beds were provided with sheets, very coarse, to be sure, but far preferable to the filthy blankets at the field hospital. The food was better too. Instead of the soggy bread we had a more flakey and tasty grade also.



Broth and tea were given us. Here, too, I found an American who had already been there four days. Although at opposite ends of the ward, we were allowed to call back and forth to each other. It was while here that I was interviewed by an intelligence officer. Contrary to my expectations, there were no "third degree" methods applied. He was very persistent in his inquiries, but by giving him a brief and entirely false story of my activities since landing in France, which I had two days to prepare for, and by assuming complete ignorance on all other points, I seemed to satisfy him. In answer to my inquiry, he told me he had talked to Smith and that the latter was well. I could learn nothing further from him.

On the third day we were put on a hospital train, and taken to Kreuznach. On the train we met five more Americans, and all seven of us were sent to the same hospital, two of the others being assigned to the same ward as myself.

And now may I digress for a moment? In this account I am relating only what treatment I received personally. Far from believing it typical of the treatment accorded wounded prisoners, I have the opinion that the group at Kreuznach were among the most fortunate of all the prisoners. This opinion is based on subsequent conversations with men who had been confined in a number of different hospitals and camps.

On arrival at Kreuznach things began to appear quite different to us. Prior to this we had been moving from one place to another, and had the prospect of this to buoy us up. Now we had reached the place where we would stay until well enough to be transferred to a camp and put to work. Not a cheerful outlook, I will admit.

Here, as before, we received expert surgical care. X-ray pictures were made in numerous cases, and dressings were changed regularly. To be sure, they seemed very short on all supplies and medicines, and were entirely without cotton. For this they used a very light, fluffy paper. And except in extreme cases, all bandages were also of paper. The latter resembled greatly the ordinary white crepe paper we can buy in any stationery store. I had a woolen bandage which I used for the wound in my side, and guarded it as one of my most precious possessions. Four Americans died while I was there, but in no case was it due to lack of care—their wounds were too severe to allow of recovery. And in each case, everything possible was done to relieve their suffering.

interest us, and secure for us what reading matter there was available. And the other was an English prisoner, David Bright. After his wounds had completely healed he was retained at the hospital as orderly for Mrs. Mors. The American, English and Canadian patients were in



*German Tractors*

three wards, on three different floors. Through these two we were able to communicate with each other.

The food here was neither palatable nor variable. It consisted of boiled barley, boiled cabbage, boiled potatoes, barley coffee, and black bread. To be sure, we were given all we could eat of the cabbage, potatoes and barley. But we soon found that our physical capacity was satisfied long before our hunger was.

Immediately on our arrival at Kreuznach we had filled out cards giving our names, organizations, prison address, and name and address of person to be notified, and mailed them to the International Red Cross at Geneva, Switzerland. As a result of these, packages of food and clothing were sent to us regularly. Of these, but two came through. They contained hard tack, *real* coffee, sugar, tobacco, and cans of salmon, bully beef, corned willy, jam, tomatoes and corn. Although many of those articles would not have appealed very strongly to us prior to capture, they were a wonderful treat under the circumstances. The other packages intended for us all went astray. We were allowed to write a letter once in two weeks and a postal card each week. I have since learned that all I wrote, with a single exception, were sent through. But they were not received until between two and three months after I wrote them.

Through the newspapers, which the nurse brought us, and which some of the boys were able to read, we knew of the negotiations leading up to the signing of the armistice, and of the developments resulting in the abdication of the Kaiser. Naturally, our interest in the former news was far greater than in the latter, but the opposite was true of the majority of the Germans around us. When we finally learned that the armistice had actually been signed our joy was boundless. We had learned the conditions, and had in mind particularly the one calling for "immediate release of prisoners." There were two of us to whom this was particularly welcome. Although our wounds were still being dressed, we had sufficiently recovered to be transferred to a camp, and would have been sent within a few days had the armistice not intervened. Two of the fellows were not so fortunate; they were transferred a few days before.



*Loading Point at Vertuscy Canal Dock*

There were two persons in the hospital to whom all the English speaking patients owe a great deal. One was the nurse in charge of us, Mrs. Mathilda Mors. She spoke English very well and was untiring in her efforts to relieve all suffering possible, bring us any news she thought would

Technically, the 11th of November ended our experiences as prisoners. Those of us who were up and around asked to be allowed to leave the hospital. We were refused. But again Mrs. Mors came to our aid, and her intercession resulted in permission being given. We did not leave



*English, French and American Prisoners in Germany*

Kreuznach until the 13th of December, but during the balance of our stay there we came and went at will, took walks and car rides through the surrounding country, visited the moving picture theatre frequently, and saw all there was of interest in the town and the country around.

From November 24th to 31st inclusive, the German 5th Army was passing through Kreuznach on their return. They formed a continuous procession lasting for eight days and nights.

On the 8th of December the first French troops reached

the town. With them there was an American medical officer, and two of us were fortunate enough to meet him on the street. For once it was not only a duty, but a very great pleasure to salute an officer.

For the next five days we ate all our meals with the various French units in the town. The men were most generous and shared everything they had with us. From them we received the first American cigarettes we had seen in many weeks. We had exchanged our French money for marks and had been able to buy German cigarettes, but these were made of leaves and about half the size of ours. Yet we paid three and four cents apiece for them.

By the 13th we had learned positively that the Americans were in Coblenz. So, tired of waiting for the hospital train which was to come "soon," so the French told us, we persuaded the Germans to give us our treatment records, and those of us who were able took the ordinary train to Coblenz. Our party consisted of ten Americans, including one lieutenant and six English, including a lieutenant. We presented quite an appearance. Several were on crutches, several had arms in slings, and not one had a complete uniform. We had some of the clothes we had worn when wounded, some we had begged from the members of an American ambulance unit, others we had salvaged from the effects of the Americans and French who had died, and articles of German uniform which we had put on only when we could get nothing else.

At Coblenz we reported at once to G. H. Q. They sent the Englishmen on to Cologne, and assigned us to an American hospital in town. We were once again with the American forces! We had suffered many hardships, to be sure. But we had come through alive, and words cannot express the feeling of thankfulness that was ours.

## A Prisoner's Experience

By M. E. W. T. Gilbert

Taken prisoner in the closing days of the war my experiences are not typical of a prisoner's lot and are merely offered as they may be of interest. I was captured November 4th, seven days before the signing of the armistice and returned to France, December 1st; thus my stay in Germany was somewhat less than a month.

Early the morning of November 4th, I started away from Vraincourt with the purpose of making a reconnaissance of an old German track with which it was purposed to connect.

With the aid of the contour map, the night before I had decided the grades would be very heavy up to the divide and again down the other side and so I wished to, if possible, reach a certain fork in the road from where I could see down the grade and estimate its steepness.

I did not know just where the trench line lay, and meeting a runner or message carrier asked him if it was possible to go to the aforesaid fork of the road, to which he replied that he had just come from there and that the American line was at the brow of the hill. A bit further on I stopped at a first aid station but they knew nothing of the front line, but from their location I judged the runner's information to be good, and so went on, up the road and around the edge of the hill. Here there were two revetments across the road and from their appearance they had not been used for some time, so I passed them and just beyond were a couple of dead Frenchmen. This

was not unusual and seemed to tally with the runner's information of a recent advance, so I passed them and continued on about 50 yards to where two rolls of German wire lay across the road. Seeing a path in this, about two feet wide, I believed everything was all right, but nevertheless hesitated for an instant and at the same time heard two cracks of a rifle from the trees in front and



*Narrow Gauge near Leonval*

off to the right. Deciding it was an American Sniper, shooting down the hill toward the German line I continued on to the fork, took my look and then turned back.

I walked back about one hundred yards, my fears



at rest, paying attention to the track. Needless to say I was more than startled to hear someone say "hallo," and in looking up to see rifles pointed at me from both sides of the road. In order to get away I must go between them and across the open stretch. Realizing my position in an instant I decided there was nothing to do but accept defeat and do what they wished. At the point of a gun, I was forced to go along the trench and into a dugout. There I was questioned as to my business but evaded replying and tried to get rid of the maps in my pocket, but they were taken from me. To my surprise nothing else was taken and I was made to go into the far end of the dugout and to sit down. At dusk, amid an American barrage with four soldiers and a sergeant as guard, I was conducted

one-half a pound, and the cost of tooth brush and paste was in proportion.

Saturday morning, November 9th, with five aviators who had been imprisoned in the same place, I started for Karlsruhe from where I was to be sent on to some other camp, at least so the intelligence officer informed me early that morning. We boarded a train and proceeded to "Arlon" where we waited a few hours, then boarded a train for Germany. It was not a cheerful group, but we made the best of it. The trip was very long but after passing through Luxembourg and what seemed like the most of Germany on the morning of November 11th, we arrived at Karlsruhe.

Accompanied by our guard we were walking down the



*German Prison Camp*

back in and out several dugouts, to what seemed to be the Battalion Headquarters. I was put into an automobile with two soldiers as guards. After a long, cold journey we arrived at an intelligence office. They tried to question me but, so far as I know, except from the maps I carried and the passes, etc., in my pockets they obtained nothing. There seemed to be a general attitude of despair abroad among them and they cared but little when I refused to answer questions.

The interpreter, an intelligent chap, arranged to feed me, and though I was very hungry, it was with little relish that I sampled the black bread and coffee. The next day, the intelligence office moved, and on foot I moved with them from the town of Marville to Corneln about ten kilometers to the rear. That night I was sent by automobile, under guard, to Virtone to what proved to be the central intelligence office.

There I was locked in a second-story room of a French house with guards at every corner, slept on the floor and ate what was given me. I had one of the guards purchase some soap, tooth brush and paste. Soap was twelve marks (about four dollars) for a piece of about

platform and were very startled to see a crippled soldier, using a sword as a cane, come up and give some orders on receipt of which the guards became very happy and started removing their buttons and insignia. Instantly there flashed through our heads that something strange was happening and on our entrance to the station building, we knew it. Soldiers and officers were taking off buttons and insignia and all weapons were being confiscated. Our guards were disarmed and two soldiers with red bands in their arms, escorted us to what seemed to be a hotel where we were ushered into a second-story room with non-transparent windows. There were beds for six of us in the one room and needless to say we were soon in them. After a few hours sleep we proceeded to wash up and soon felt better. We were eager to know just what was happening and by climbing on the top of the bed one was just able to see through the one transparent transom. The first day, November 11th, we saw many strange sights through that transom. Something was under way and we could not ascertain what. First of note a soldier with a red band on his arm riding bareback, accosting all soldiers and officers, ordering them to remove all insignia and I remember seeing one Sam Browne belt disappear in a pocket and but-

tions and insignia were disappearing everywhere. There was no great disturbance visible and the apparent revolution was very quietly carried out. To amuse ourselves we made a checker board and a set of dominoes and as there were six of us the time passed in some way.

The next morning they lined us all up, added about



*French Foyer des Soldats*

twenty others and marched us, some limping and some partially clothed, a motley crew, through the town to the prison camp. Here we were put on our honor to change our money into that manufactured and marked prison camp money. All this time I was with the five aviator lieutenants and, not being an officer, I expected to be separated and sent to another camp, but to my surprise I was passed through, the contents of my pockets superficially examined and soon I was assigned a bed in the Offizieren Kriegsgefangenen Sager. I did not quite understand why; but resolved, after seeing the place, to remain there if I could, in preference to going to another camp. The billets or barracks were very comfortable and we had ample room. Six of us occupied a quarter of the barracks. Our section was divided into two rooms with lockers used as a partition. One room was used as a dining and living room, the other as sleeping quarters.

My initiation into prison camp life proved very surprising. First I learned that the armistice and revolution were assured facts. Second, I received a ration of all the things needed from the Red Cross Committee: potted meats, cereals, cakes, biscuits, in fact sufficient food for almost a week, a complete shaving outfit, towels, tobacco, the clothes that were needed and even a suit of pajamas.

Life in the prison camp soon assumed a phase of comfort. Six of us were sleeping in the little room and I soon struck up a firm friendship with two English infantry lieutenants and a Canadian flyer of American birth. The four of us pooled our food, cooked and ate together and in fact it was a very comfortable existence. A well-stocked camp library added to our comfort. After the first week we were given the liberty of the town and walks were a welcome change. Several of us attended a performance of "Hamlet" and moving picture shows were a pleasant diversion. It was more or less of a spectacle for the civilians; at least we felt that way but managed to enjoy life more or less. At this time the guard became very lax

and many successful escapes were made. But we four had talked the matter over and arrived at the decision that as we were likely to be returned very soon it was foolish to escape at this late day and would only remove the privileges of those who were not physically able to escape, so we stayed, gradually becoming more and more impatient until November 27th.

On that day we marched down to the station, some four hundred strong, French, English, Belgians, Portuguese, Italians and Americans, boarded a special train of first-class coaches and started on our way. It is needless to say we were glad to go. At Villizen we were ordered to detrain and marched out to another camp. Here many met friends but we had expected to go right through and it was a disappointment. On learning that all the Americans had left camp that day for Switzerland and were spending a day in Constance, a committee from the American contingent started to work and after a day's effort secured permission to join the others at Constance. It was with real regret I parted company with my friends. In the few weeks together we had learned to know each other and had built a sound friendship.

However we left that night enroute to Constance, arriving there at seven o'clock the following morning. The Americans from Villizen were already aboard the train and it did not take us long to follow them.

It is impossible to describe the sensation experienced by all in crossing the border to Switzerland. We were the first train of returned prisoners and every last one of the Swiss seemed to be waving and cheering us at doors, windows and everywhere one looked. As a demonstration of neutrality it was the best it has ever been my fortune to witness. To say we were a crazy lot would be a mild description; some were crying, some laughing, but all were happy beyond expression. At all the principal towns we were met by delegations of American Red Cross and given everything they thought we would need.

At Berne a stop of about a hour was made. We received a chicken and rice dinner, Christmas boxes, candy, tobacco and never did I appreciate a real American girl more than then, and there were several there. Crowds greeted us at every station in Switzerland. Late in the evening we crossed the border and in a frontier town transferred to an American Hospital Train. The evening of the next day the train proceeded on its way to the hospital, located at Allery.

There every one was examined, our clothes taken away and in pajamas we spent a few days in bed. Then in groups we were sent to the Convalescent Camp.

Conditions here were bad as the continual rain had turned the place into a sea of mud. However I managed to live on the daily starvation ration which brought back prison days in its resemblance to the food issued by the Germans. Three weeks later, I finally persuaded them to start me back to the outfit, and after a long and almost uninteresting trip, due to the lack of money, reported January 4th, 1919, for duty.

I found but little change with the exception of the absence of Colonel Slifer though the two months were to me like a separation of years.



## An Army Engineer's Romance

St. Mihiel on the River Meuse, is one of the many French towns that suffered almost complete destruction from German Artillery fire. Some families were able to make their escape. Monsieur Cuny, with his wife and their three daughters; Jenne, Lucie and Marcelle, were among the fortunate ones. After spending four days and nights in a dugout with but little to eat and only such of their belongings as they had hurriedly picked up they were able to make their escape, into French occupied territory. Life for the family was begun anew with circumstances and surroundings decidedly different. Pagny being an important railroad junction and division point near the front, was selected by the French and later by the American Armies as one of the many railheads for the distribution of rations and ammunition. Because of the physical characteristics surrounding the location it was a detraining and entraining point for troops going to and returning from the trenches. The village, therefore, became the temporary home of army officers from every branch of the service, and of every grade and rank.

The mother and daughters, with a desire to aid the family fortune, opened a cafe and restaurant. Snappy, well-dressed French officers made the cafe and restaurant "Cuny" their headquarters when there were a few moments to spare, not because of the excellent champagne and wonderful meals that could be secured, but because of the far greater attraction—Mlles. Jenne, Lucie and Marcelle, who entertained in such style and manner that the horrors of war were soon forgotten by those that were fortunate enough to have the opportunity to dine at "Cuny's." Each daughter had many suitors and many requests for her heart and hand after the war, by the dashing young lieutenants. For two-and-a-half years officers came and went in what must have seemed to the girls to be an endless chain of horizon blue uniforms and caps with red tops and gold braid. The darkest days of the war were now on and defeat seemed almost certain, food was getting scarcer every day, nothing seemed right, interest in everything was gone, and the family had begun to think of the next move it would have to take toward the interior of France to keep away from the German army. The tide of faith and confidence of the people had reached its lowest ebb—then something of great interest happened. It was rumored that America had declared war and would join the Allies. This seemed too good to be true. However, the rumor was confirmed, the darkest hour had passed, the dawn of a new day was showing and everyone took a new lease on life.

Soon a new army began to make its appearance at Pagny-Sur-Meuse; one that seemed to spring into existence over night, dressed in olive drab. The village population watched with wide open eyes and mouths, saying quietly to one another "les Americaines." Jennie, Lucie and Marcelle, also interested in this new species, watched every move and gesture, evidently attempting to decide whether these newcomers from across the Atlantic were civilized human beings or still savages. Soon though, "les Americaines" officers and enlisted men learned where

"Cuny's" was and with the help of dictionaries and "French at a glance" and with many signs and gestures could get something to eat. More rivalry sprung up and the French lieutenants had to talk faster, but the young ladies did not seem so interested in what was said. Infantry, Artillery, Cavalry, came and went, then came the 21st Regiment (Light Railway) to operate from Pagny-Sur-Meuse to various points on the front. The personnel was distributed and "E" Company caught Pagny on its division. A station force was sent there to open up. Sergeant Shortley in charge, with Privates Jensen and Baker as helpers; like the others they found their way to "Cuny's." The Sergeant and Private Jensen amused



*Pvt. Baker and Bride*

themselves trying to speak French, while Baker found amusement in playing with Floriette, a wonderful specimen of the Collie family, and which proved to be the inseparable companion of Mlle. Lucie. Baker naturally saw Lucie oftener than the other sisters because of the friendship that had sprung up between himself and the



dog. Sergeant Shortley and Jensen visited "Cuny's" quite often and Baker would go along to keep from being lonesome. The Sergeant and Jensen, after obtaining something good to eat or drink would sit and talk. Baker being a mild mannered fellow, was quiet and had little to say. He would sit as if in a trance, seemed to be dreaming, strange too, for he had not been that way before. He was not sick, but seemed to have no interest in life, as they were living. Finally one day, while sitting around the block office, Jensen told the Sergeant about a famous brand of champagne he had discovered. He said, "Sergeant, you should try it. Last night I drank one bottle, and in fifteen minutes I was at peace with the world. I could see kind faced old cows standing in silvery streams of water, hear birds singing, and did not owe a cent on earth. I strongly recommend it as a tonic for anyone. Baker, why don't you try it and come back to life?" It was then and there that George made his confession. He was in love with Mademoiselle Lucie, the mistress of the collic, and explained his seeming melancholy by telling his companions that he spoke no French, neither could Lucie speak English, but he had a well developed case of love at first sight. Lucie also indicated by her actions that she considered Baker as more than a passing acquaintance. What should he do? He did not know. There had been girls back in the States he liked, and one or two he thought he loved, but now he knew he was all wrong up to this time.

There seems to be a language of love, a code for

lovers that is used and understood by them, it makes no difference if they speak a different tongue. So it was with George and Lucie, tho' there were things he wanted to tell her, he would have her know that to him "her voice was like music, t'would shame the larks and make the nightingales put their heads under their wings." He wanted her to know that she was his ideal and suited his fancy. He began French lessons and she began English. This was about the 20th day of June, 1918. It was a very short course of study, for both scholars applied themselves and soon were able to converse as freely as tho' they were of the same nationality, and were to be seen together, strolling along the canal, or over the hills when Baker was off duty. He was now thinking of the serious side of life and debating in his own mind just what steps should be taken to overcome the advances being made by the other officers and soldiers. He had come to France to help win a war, and since meeting Lucie, decided he must also win a heart. Opportunity knocks at the door of every man, so it did at his. The late summer and the beginning of the fall season saw increased activities on both sides, particularly in the air, and Pagny-sur-Meuse seemed to have been selected by the "Hun" as a target worth trying for. Air raids by day and night kept the little village in an uproar and its inhabitants were terror stricken.

Baker was always on the job and saw to it that Mlle. Lucie was protected. After he knew she was safe in one of the many bombproofs he would also select the one she was



in, not so much for protection, but that he might do what he could to comfort her and allay her fears. To her he seemed so different from the others, quiet, without fear, so comforting, strong and dependable, every inch a man. She was more interested in him than all the others. It was during one of these raids that Baker told Lucie of his "America," and the land of the free and the home of the brave, and asked her how she would like to visit the Continent across the sea. "Tres, tres bien," was her quick reply. "You may if you will, we shall see the U. S. A. together, if you will consent to become Mrs. George Baker." Ah, so sudden, and so directly to the point. Lucie hung her pretty head to hide the blush; George was persistent, and must have his answer, he must know at once what his future was to be. Then she looked him squarely in the face, her deep black eyes seeming to read the thoughts he held in his head, and gave him the answer, "Oui." They had not noticed the other occupants of the bomb proof as they left after the all clear signal was given, being absorbed in one another. The battle was won for Baker, and he at once set about other arrangements. The family was notified of their intentions and parental consent obtained, then came the formalities to be gone through to comply with French marriage laws. It was now October 15th, and no time to be lost. Two trips to Paris were made by Baker, where he was received by the American Consul, who hearing his story made all necessary arrangements with the French authorities. The Regiment moved to the Argonne, but he left his heart in Pagny-sur-Meuse to which he returned on January 8th, 1919.

On that date, at 10:00 o'clock, in the "Marie," George Baker and Lucie Cuny were made "Man and Wife" by the mayor. Directly afterward the religious ceremony was performed in the old church, completing the romance of an "Army Engineer."

The 65th U. S. Infantry was stationed there, and the 92nd Aerial Squadron with Lieut. Baker as its Commander. Each organization tried to outdo the other in providing for the wedding feast and entertainment, as all had known and loved Lucie. Everything attempted by

them was a success, thanks to the officers and men of each organization.

Now the Regiment is ordered to prepare for its homeward journey, and everyone is happy. When the anchor is weighed, and the good ship that is to take us home puts



*Cook Wheeler and Bride*

to sea with its bow toward the setting sun, the Best Regiment of Army Engineers in the A. E. F. will have with it, we hope, Mr. and Mrs. George Baker, to whom the officers and men of the Regiment, and particularly his comrades of Company "E" extends congratulations and all good wishes for their future success.

## THE OFFICERS' MESS

*By Lieutenant Spurr.*

When army life is ended, and we put on the old blue serge,  
And at noon we feel the impulse of the usual inward urge,  
We'll sit us down and contemplate the bill of fare complete,  
With brilliant hopes of finding there something fit to eat.  
I'll bet a bun with anyone that our minds will not possess  
One tiny atom of remorse that it's not our officers' mess.

It's fine to have good comradeship and fine to chin at meals,  
But it's hell to try and pick the meat off bovine knees and heels.  
It's patriotic, too, we'll own, to have a meatless day,  
But it's hell on wheels for hungry men to have 'em all that way.  
It's great to sacrifice and save for the cruel war to win,  
But now it's won and we are done, and still we eat but shin.

'Twas slum for noon, spare ribs at night, and never meat at all,  
Corn mush, sop toast, soup from a ghost or any other stall,  
And then a Cinco made of rope to turn our hard-earned francs  
to smoke.

It's hell to pay for the best of hay but sure it is no joke  
To eat hot air and mustard gas with conversation dressing,  
Then pass a pay check up each month—it's damnably distressing.

## THE OFFER WAS NOT ACCEPTED

Eat Genett, called medicine ball, digging trenches for shelter. Air raid and Anti-Aircraft shrapnel falling. He ducks into hole, forgets his gas mask, goes after it. Another man takes shelter in his hole. Genett returns and sees no shelter. Yells "200 francs for a hole."

## COMPANY B. ADOPTS A MASCOT

First Day: Invites him to mess.

Second Day: Brings his brother.

Third Day: Each brings a friend.

Fourth Day: Company starts a "Mascot" Mess Line.

## FRENCH WIT

Co. B building grade passes through potato patch, carefully gathers and piles potatoes for the mess. Dreams of "Pomme De Terre Frit." 4:30 Recall from fatigue. Frenchman arrives with cart, gathers up the potatoes.

## CONFLANS TO LE MANS

*Sergt. H. E. Steycert*

The momentous day had arrived. We began our preparations for what we thought was our preliminary step homeward. The morning of our departure developed into a commotion of droning motor trucks, darting back



*Y. M. C. A. Force at Jarney and Section of Y Bldg.*

and forth, speedily conveying our baggage to the awaiting cars. Busily transferring the remnants of our equipment to the train and restoring the original neatness of our domiciles, the camp assumed the semblance of a bee hive. When boarding our sidedoor pullman coaches it was purely a proposition of the early bird catching the worm. Our comfort depended to a large extent upon our personal ingenuity.

The train consisted of forty cars of French, German, and American manufacture. We departed after experiencing the customary delay but were delighted to hear that an American operating crew had been assigned to our train. Consequently we were assured of speed and thrill while at the mercy of the Engineer for our safety. At high noon of March 22nd our train slowly creaked out of the Conflans yard. Feeling certain of enjoying at least a two days' journey we immediately improved upon the living conditions of our improvised quarters which by grace of good fortune was of American design and construction. Unlike previous migrations we were fully aware of our whereabouts and proposed destination. One car was reserved for our cooks and their culinary impediment. This was the master car of the entire train and on which the most concern was centered. Another car was assigned to the band and by their generous efforts we were doubly entertained en route. Having the side door of our freight car wide open, the clear, invigorating air intensified our appetites and our first meal was served at Verdun. Many crosses marked the resting place of those who fought and died here in one of the most terrible and sanguinary battles of the Great War. As the train came to a dead stop, the bugler announced mess with his blaring notes and in a wild scramble we formed that customary line and greedily wedged our way forward.

Thoroughout our entire trip our mess lines were formed with unfailing regularity. Here the quality of our rations had undergone an appreciative change and cookies, candy, oranges and cigarettes were handed out in liberal quantities. We were allowed an additional ten minutes after each meal for exercise. Several of the boys

devoted this time to stag dancing and singing to the entrancing melody of the band in piecemeal.

We instantly obeyed the bugle call demanding our return to the cars and we departed from the devastated city of historical Verdun. The passing scenery held a charm, both picturesque and pleasing. Fields, uncultivated and made impassable by ceaseless entanglements of rusted barbed wire and zig-zagging trenches and debris were superseded by well cultivated plots separated by neither fence nor hedge. The trees overflowing with bursting buds and blossoms presented a more peaceful and desirable scene. At Lerouville we partook of supper. Here, again, in Indian fashion, we stretched our limbs and inhaled several draughts of sun filtered air besides doing justice to what we soldiers considered an elaborate supper.

Our next stop was at Commercy where we hesitated for ten minutes to procure our mail and render a brief concert at the railroad station. Many of the boys were anxious to visit this city for the last time, but this privilege was denied them. We proceeded on our way and in eager expectancy we stretched our necks and gaped for a last fond look at Sorey Camp which for eight months was our old home and favorite haunt. As we approached Sorey Gare we shifted to the right and barely touching the outskirts we rolled towards Void. The old hill, white and glistening in the glorious sunshine was slowly passing from our view as we sped onward, but the quaint village of dear old Sorey and the hospitality of its generous-hearted citizens will linger in our memory for many years to come.

Before dusk had fallen we were well on our way with a speed unlike the majority of trains of this length. As we approached the village of Gondrecourt, darkness ended our day of sightseeing. We closed the doors and wired our candles securely to the walls. This was very necessary, as judging from the uncomfortable riding I imagined that our car was riding on two or three triangular wheels. Now that absorbing the passing scenery was out



*Entrance to Labry Barracks*

of the question, we entertained ourselves by cards and humorous discourse. Our blankets, overcoats and every other article with comfort yielding qualities were spread on the floor of the car to serve us as a substitute for a bed. The fact that we preferred rest to speed did not interfere with the engineer's mania for dare devil travel-



ing. That together with our cramped position, and the frequent stops and starts, made sleeping more undesirable than is usual. We managed to close our eyes and rest our limbs sufficiently to assure us of a somewhat restful feeling on the following morning, and when the morning had come at last we were all set for another day of sightseeing. The scenery was but a continuation of small villages and surrounding fields with meadows and an occasional town large enough to be classed as a city. At Juvisy we had the most pleasant surprise of all. Here we lingered for a half hour, and our stay was enlivened by another pleasing concert rendered by the Regimental Band. It was Sunday and the citizens on their way from church thronged around our train to welcome us. Very few troops had passed through this city, as was manifested by the friendly interest and hospitality they tendered us.

En route from here to Le Mans we passed through the city of Versailles, and only the sparkling of the city lights, penetrating the inky darkness of night, presented an artistic outline of the sleeping city. We awoke the following morning to find ourselves stationed in Le Mans' Embarkation Camp. We arrived here at 2:00 A. M. and were instantly greeted by a large group of M. P.s, who for some sinister purpose surrounded our train, and with at least two of them posted at each car we felt absolutely safe from intruders.

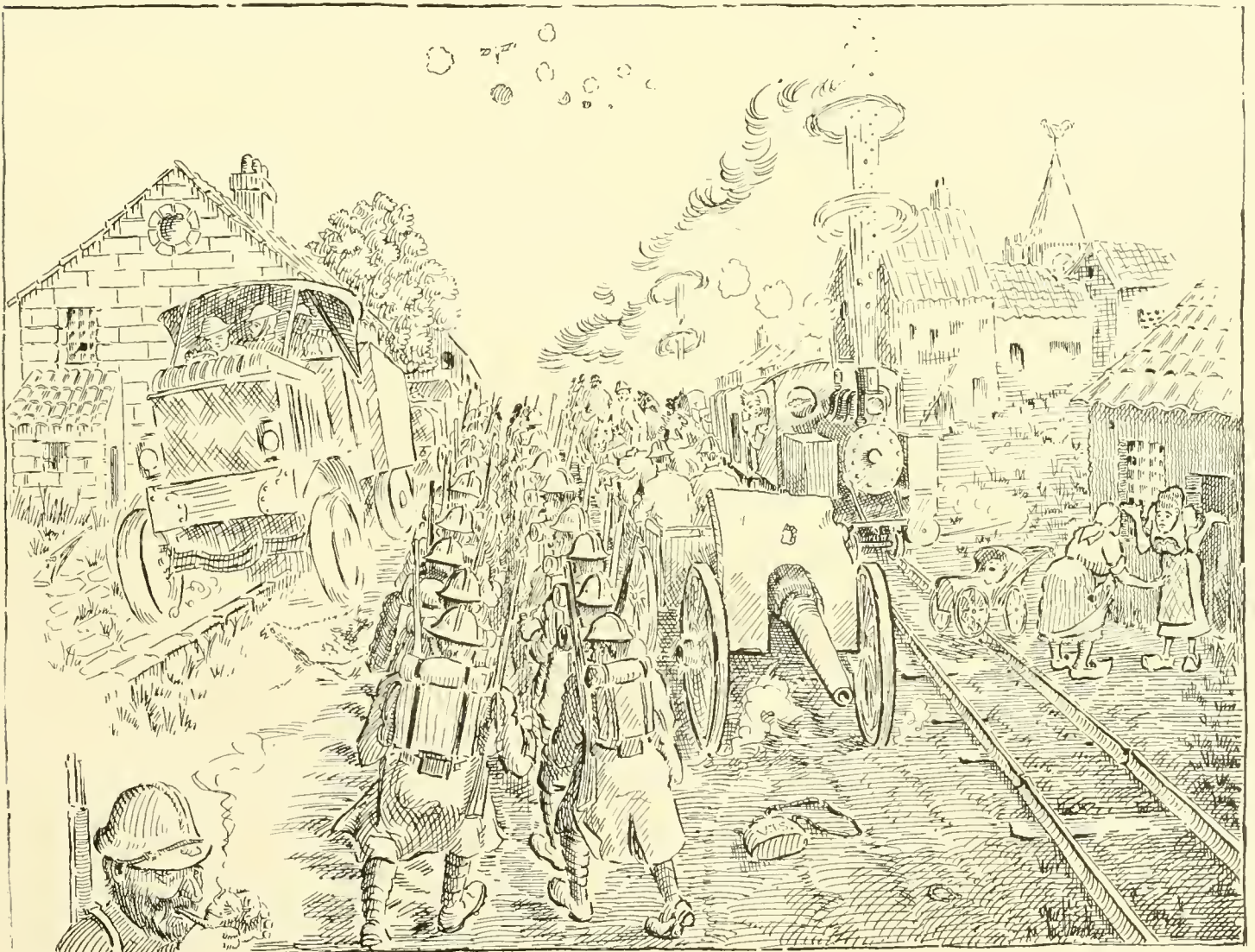
## THE UNFOUNDED HISTORY OF THE 21ST CHEMENT FARES (Light Track)

*By G. D. Ingells, Corp. Ord.*

Oh, railroad man, with coal streaked face,  
Thy talk and smell denote thy place,  
Thy language, too, stands out apart,  
Oh, would it weren't, it stops my start,  
For I can't print here what you say,  
And tell it in the railroad way.

Why pick flowers and birds and skys and things for subjects of poetry, when you can use a railroad man? What is more beautiful than a railroad man to write poetry on? Ask me? Where be there anything more spiritual and nicer than a railroad man? It can't, decidedly. And just think and tarry a minute,—the 21st Chement Fares regiment has hundreds of just such men.

It was at Camp Grant, Rockford, Ill., during the mating months of September, October and November that this regiment of rails was made up, but just think since then they have traveled mightily, mainly Irupe, Europe and Syrup. They consisted of an omelette of tallow pots, stingers, snakes, hoggers, gandy-dancers, clock watchers and whistle jumpers. Here after learning the difference between spiking by and squads east, with many pack, gun and blanket, they scun eastward to Tene-flea, state of Mosquito, near Bohoken. After three or four days of Green River nights and listening to sailing destructions, we left erstwhile after a good hot cold break-





fast at three dirty the morning after Ooltide. We took large track train to Hamberger American lines where the former President Grant awaited us. He had changed beaucoup, having become larger in the stern and grey above the water line. He was quiet though and seemed to take us all in. After trying our air we left that afternoon sailing with Sante Fe promptness at exactly 4:30 P. M. with the usual clickity-click of the — — — waves beneath us.

Oh, woe be the day when we Twenty-first Ciment Fares sailed by the statue of prohibition singing, "We're Five Million Short." Oh, wee, you soldier has a hungry look, says I, home is slipping quietly away from us, Oh, wee. Fifteen long days did we cast our bread upon the waters but soon after feeding the wily fish, switching empties doubling over, losing coupling pins and side tracking naval officers we reached the clean beautiful, rainy, muddy city of Brest, France, Jan. 10th, 1918, and turning our stern railroad faces to France, we spake as the band played, "Lead Me To The Beer, Oh, Brother."

France, we Twenty-first at last have come,  
A fighting bunch that never run,  
Our work all dealt with perils before,  
So lead us to the scene of war.

(Extract from "VANILLA.")

But says we ciment fares 'tis land anyhow and oh how we craved land, real old juicy dirt, and France sure had it. We now goes to Gievres and Nevers disrespectively. At them places of rest and otherwise we were teachd the importance of the pick and the usefulnesses of shovels. We soon were a well trained bunch of pickers and shovelers. Woe be a German who might dast come into the clear with us ciment fare boys. I hate to think of it—the pick and the shovel. Then we scum to the front where we ran little engines and everything all over the front at San Michel. The doughboys they put bumpers in the front line trenches so our fellers wouldn't steem into Germany. Them little engines were hellers but in good spirits most of the time, even the stack would spark with the Boche just for fun. One boiler got laid up



*View on the Standard Gauge Operated by the 21st Engineers for The Army of Occupation*

with the flue though, and we had to clean them—the flues. If they got real low we would give them an injection to bring 'um to. N'everything. The rail wasn't very heavy, but that's a poor thing to make light of.

Never will we forget Saucy-Gare, Nuffies Tang, Ran-

gees-Val, Minnie-the-Tourer, Naugess-Saard and Mount Sex and manorious places. Them were the days. Then after clement faren here we alleys to the Argonne and now even them days are gone, but we've all made up our minds Verdun. Homesick, why you ought to of heard Dombasle the other night, it's orful stuff that Van rooze. We stayed in this vicinity and places and mud till the



*American Tent Camp*

Armistice was declared and the Boche had made more back protectors and caught up on sauereraut. That night there was flares, cartridges, clement fares, frenchmen, mud, corn-willy n'everything all going at once. Never was they such a seen and happinesses before in the clement fare boys. That night us railroad men all wrote home to our fecancays and writ, "Awake, thee time be here, your sweetheart is soon amongst you."

From here we took up slack and that spotted us in Conflans and Superbs. Here we took over the large sized track and the man sized engines. It was a change though, the mud being redder here, because we were in a greater Van Rooze country.

Vin rooze, blink not your ruby eyes,  
Vin blink, rooze not your pallid cheeks,  
You both brings forth to us but sighs  
And are but spendings of the weeks.

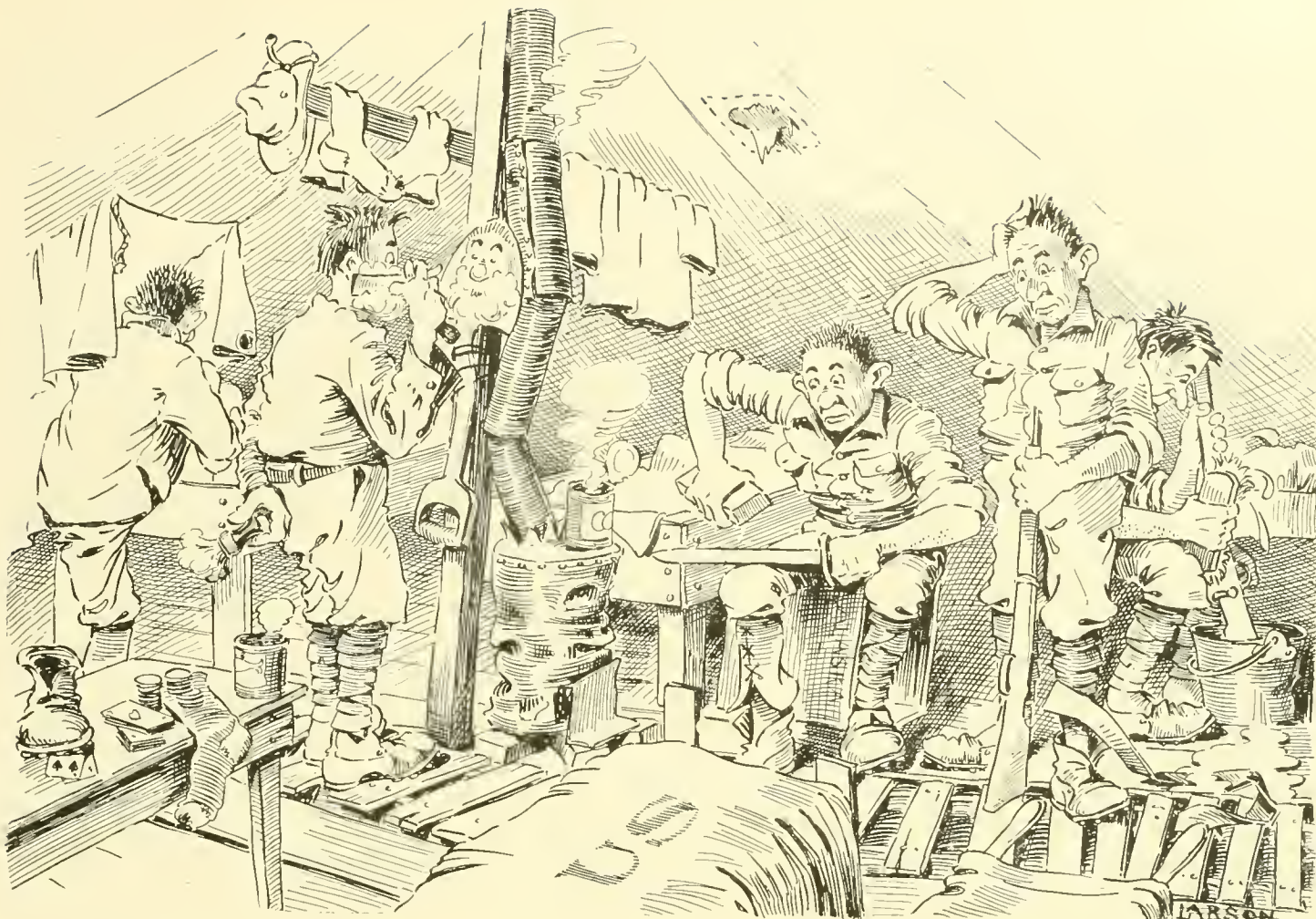
(Quotation from "The Dying Camel.")

Our quarters were not so worser here but more restrictions were put on us and they accused us of an over-supply of clothing. What is it and M. P. to a railroad man. There you are. Now we have scum to Labry across the Jordon to some once German barracks. Here encore we are sifted, drilled and made up for another haul. Let's hope it's home. Never will I leave the cat, armchair, beer and engine again. Let us drop our tail light here for Ameriky, Oh, land of my youth.

Lives there a "Rail" with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself have said,  
I've did my bit, I wanta go home  
Then turned to bunk with stifled moan.  
If such there be, go, mark him well,  
Go bawl him out and give him hell,  
High though his title, boundless his wealth,  
Be he sick in bed or red with health,  
Despite those titles, powers and pelf,  
That rail concentered all in self  
Living should be kicked round and round,  
And doubly dying should go down  
In the wet mud from whence he sprung,  
Unwept, Unhonored, and Unsung.

(From the "Man Without A Company.")





## "THE BATTLE OF BOUCQ"

*By Sgt. Al Hansen*

'Twas down on the Old Toul Sector,  
Me and old pal Pete;  
Now don't g'nd and pretend you're sleepy—  
Lend an ear, your sleep'll keep.

Two months without pay day,  
Not a franc or clacker in sight;  
Not a day off for weeks, not a Sunday—  
Just gandy dance with all your might.

You can see that things were stiflin',  
Every man of us itching for a fight;  
When the bugler called us to battle,  
"Pay Day," and he blew it all right.

Out of the barracks and camouflaged places,  
With a whoop, a holler and yell,  
Came the comp'ny's valiant aces,  
Their money belts anxious to swell.

With beaucoup francs amongst them,  
With nary a backward look,  
With the strains of the national anthem,  
They marched to the battle of Boucq.

Oh, the A. E. F. has had many a fight  
That will go down in history and song.  
But the battle of Boucq will ne'er be told,  
Though it wasn't just what you would call wrong.

The entry was made with ease and dispatch,  
Our forces they couldn't withstand;  
The vin shops opened wide their barred doors,  
And inside marched the thirsty band.

Inside they did see, with hilarious joy,  
The enemy plainly in sight;  
Their forces of Champagne, Rum and Wine  
They charge! "Come on, you boys, sit tight."

Did they falter? No, not one father's son,  
But they showered the frnacs like hail;  
The dead ones on the long table grew,  
The Madam, in fear, turned pale.

Oh, yes, 'twas a wonderful fight, sir,  
All straining to do their bit,  
But the rooms were warm, the enemy strong,  
Though everyone made a hit.

After hours and hours of much struggling  
The vin shops were cleaned right,  
And the battered and breath-scented heroes,  
Campward did turn, fatigued, but not in flight.

The casualties, six in the village,  
Were held in the guardhouse awhile,  
They couldn't explain to the Boucq M. P.,  
He would not have ear to their guile.

Ah, well I remember four young bucks,  
'Twas a beautiful sight you will admit;  
They went to sleep in the village graveyard—  
"Lights out," yelled the guards, "you're lit!"

And one brave lad came struggling along—  
Only fifteen had this boy killed;  
But the glory of battle had stirred his young blood,  
His noodle, with dreams, was filled.

He had shed himself of blouse and his shirt,  
A sleeveless jersey, red and black,  
Adorned his pliant, Apollo-like form,  
As he followed the narrow gauge track.

He came along on hands and knees,  
Barking all the while like a pup;  
Some of the officers at whom he barked,  
Must have wondered what's up.

When they finally reached the barracks  
Roll call quickly was made,  
To find how many warriors  
In battle had passed away.

The skipper was quite horror-struck,  
Such losses—'twas a sin;  
He sent out many, many bucks  
To bring the wounded in.

The searchers found them everywhere,  
From La Reine 'way to Boucq;  
In ditches, roadways, on the track,  
Any place that they might have looked.

They gave succor to the wounded,  
In the shape of wallops and kicks;  
If they could not get them otherwise,  
They pelted them with bricks.

And finally, to the last man,  
They got them into camp;  
The jailbirds, graveyard sleepers clan,  
And all the other scamps.

I'd like to tell of barracks scenes,  
But that's another story;  
At any rate, they did not smell  
Much like a conservatory.

'Twas with great labor that the top  
Made his bunch get out the next morning;  
With the exertions of the previous day,  
They did not hear the bugler's horn.

But when they straggled into line,  
It was a sorry sight to see;  
Dilapidated, nervous wrecks,  
A shaking at the knees.

And then the Captain spoke with might;  
Nary a word of praise. Oh, well,  
Old Sherman never knew how right  
He was when he said War was Hell.

## HOW THE 21ST PUT IT OVER ON THE M. P.'S

*Pvt. Peter La Frankie*

It was very difficult at times to get into Commercy, the mecca for the "vingt et une Genie," and many schemes were used to foil the M. P.'s. One that worked for a while was to keep out of sight, outside the town, crawl into a camion truck or other covered vehicle. They finally got next to this. One Sunday, having tramped fifteen kilometers from the woods near Boucq, two of us arrived before the gates of the forbidden city, footsore



*Cognac Klingsmith, Ready to Start for the St. Mihiel Front During the Drive*

and hungry. We climbed into a French wagon loaded with baled hay. There was little room and we were tightly squeezed between the bales.

We rode triumphantly over the bridge into town and were congratulating ourselves on our good fortune when an M. P., suspecting something from the way the French-

man ran the mules up the street, at the point of a gat, he held up the wagon and proceeded to search it. When he saw our feet sticking out of the hind end, he greeted us in a nice friendly tone. "Where in the h—l are you guys going?" Politely, we informed him that we had already arrived. But that big M. P. was hardhearted and



*Grosrouvre Siding and Dump*

invited us to proceed him out of town at the point of his automatic.

Parting with him at the end of the bridge, we informed him we would eat dinner in town. Going up the canal, we bribed a Frenchman to ferry us over. Entering the town through the woods, we enjoyed our dinner and walked out past the M. P.'s on our way home.

A more daring and original method was used by one of our sergeants. Algerian soldiers dress in O. D. uniforms and as the sergeant had an exceptionally dark complexion, he received an inspiration. Securing a red Algerian hat, he placed it on his head, putting the American overseas cap in his pocket. Nonchalantly he walked over the bridge without molestation from the M. P.'s. Upon reaching the other side, he changed back to his overseas cap.

## LIEUTENANT COLONEL SAM ROBERTSON

One of the best known Officers in the Light Railway organizations was Lieut. Colonel Sam Robertson. He was well known as a worker, but better for his stock of rich yankee humor. The following are a few illustrations:

While the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 21st Engineers were moving through Vigneulles on their way from Sorey to the Argonne front, the Germans made it pretty warm for them. The engines were carefully shrouded with canvas to hide the light. Smoking was forbidden and all train signals were given by means of whistles carried by the members of the crew. Tense excitement was prevalent among everyone, for the German trenches were a short distance away. Suddenly everyone was horrified to see coming jauntily along the track a brightly lighted lantern.

"Hey, you blankety blank son of a blank, put out that blank light," yelled Sgt. Hack, of Co. D.

"Go to H—l," was the short and snappy reply.

"Maybe you don't know who I am, I'm Sgt. Hack; put out that glim."

"Maybe you don't know who I am. I'm just Colonel Robertson, you go to H—l."

Of course, it was often necessary to have a light to see how the work was progressing, which necessarily had to be done at night so near enemy observation, but it did



seem that the Colonel was courting death by carrying his lantern. Finally someone remonstrated with him.

"Colonel, aren't you just a little afraid that Fritz will take a shot at that light some night."

"Well, if he did he wouldn't hit it. I'm not long enough in one place."



*River at Conflans*

One day he approached a detail working on the track, the Sergeant of which was standing apart with folded arms looking very much superior to those he had in charge.

"Who is the man in charge here," he inquired.

"I am, Sir," replied the Sergeant.

"Well, where in H—I is your shovel?"

#### LIEUTENANT COLONEL SLIFER

The Colonel's orderly once made this remark. "I can't play a fiddle, but if the Old Colonel asked me to play, I'd make a damn hard try. This was the spirit of every man in the Regiment.

The Colonel was one of the biggest men any of us probably ever had the pleasure to work for. He had a faculty of getting everyone about him to work with enthusiasm. The following are a few side-lights into his method of stimulating pep amongst "His Boys."

Col.: "Donecker, where in hell's that correspondence?"

John Donecker: "Sir. I've got ten men looking for that letter."

Col.: "Some day I'm going to have a file of my own, it's going to be that stove. When I put a letter in it, I'll at least know where it is."

\* \* \*

Colonel to Capt. Farran, during an air raid: "Well, put out your own lights, but let mine alone, I got work to do."

\* \* \*

Colonel after telling one of his men that he had orders to do a certain thing which sounded ridiculous. "I know it is not right, but I'm a hell of a guy on orders, until they get things balled up. Then we make our own orders."

\* \* \*

Col. to a Master Engineer: "We have three 400 feet warehouses to build."

Master Engineer: "But, Colonel, we have no lumber."

Col. "Salvage some scrap and build them out of it."

Needless to say, the warehouses were built.

Col. (before his accident): "My place is up there at the front. If the boys see their Colonel there, they'll work."

\* \* \*

Colonel after some close shelling, to Mike Drummond, driving his car, "Pretty hot up here, Mike."

"Mike: "Yes, Sorr (Whiz-z-z-boom, a shell comes over) and shure ye're a fool for coming up 'ere, sorr."

\* \* \*

A Second Lieutenant of an Infantry outfit just arriving at the Front, resented the lack of military etiquette shown him and his associates by men of the 21st Engineers. "Lt.-Col., your men do not salute me."

Col.: "W-e-l-l, they don't salute me—how in H—I do you expect them to salute you."

\* \* \*

Col.: "Donnelly, I want an eight kilometer telephone line to Cheppy by four o'clock."

Donnelly: "It can't be done, Sir."

Col.: "Well, I'll give you till six o'clock then."

Donnelly, calling up at 3:55: "Your line is in, Sir; this is Cheppy."

Col.: "Well, Donnelly, you almost fell down on the job, didn't you?"

Donnelly (with much satisfaction): "Yes, Sir."

\* \* \*

Col. (Upon questioning an Officer): "I don't want to know what you think. What do you know?"

\* \* \*

Col.: "Oh! G-a-y-b Gab-ri-el!"

Strutner: "The Major is down in the court yard, Sir."

Col.: "One of you, two of you, all of you, go get him!"

Major Gabriel (puffing his pipe) upon arrival: "Seems like the Colonel wants to see me."

\* \* \*

Col. (ringing up the Supply house): "MacLaren, how many blankets have you got in the warehouse?"

MacLaren: "None, Sir."

Col.: "I want a thousand blankets by 8 o'clock tonight. Get them."

MacLaren (at 8 P. M.): "Sir, I have the thousand blankets."

Lt.-Col. smiled, with an inquiring or rather knowing stare at MacLaren, but said nothing. One must not ask too many questions in the Army.

\* \* \*

Colonel Slifer to Army Headquarters over the telephone: "I don't care if I am stepping on the toes of a Brigadier General, or a Colonel. If the Light Railway don't get gasoline by 6 o'clock tonight, the Light Railway stops operating to the front—to the Army, do you get me?" Then he hung up the receiver with a slam.

#### IT'S ALL IN THE HEAD

Christian Science may or may not be what it is claimed, but it evidently has good points since it made one fellow believe that a canvas "pup" tent was bullet proof. While at Jouy, a regiment of engineers was experimenting with a new explosive for the purpose of blowing up barbed wire. Not being notified of the tests, the explosions took us by surprise. No one knew just what they were. This fellow evidently thought they were shells or bombs and instantly started running down the road, holding his pup tent over his head for protection.

## SUNNY FRANCE

During the spring of 1917 a number of the men of the Motor Detachment made several trips from Sorey to St. Nazaire and Bordeaux to bring back a number of Garford one and one-half ton and Mack five ton trucks across country. What a change it was to get away from the mud and rain and rush of work at the front and go south to drive back through a quiet and peaceful part of France in sunshine and warm weather.

The children would stand by the roadside and hold out flowers to us until we had our trucks decorated like a circus parade and the old women would hold out baskets of fruit as we went through the villages. Nothing was too good for the "Grand Ameriques" who were going to save their France, and when we stopped for the night in some little village the whole town would turn out to greet us, and early the next morning they would turn out again to wish us "Bon Voyage."

Those were the good old days.

## SAFETY FIRST

While at Cheppy a certain member of our Company was personally conducted by an unseen power to a dug-out whenever a German plane came over. One night he desired to change his underwear but was afraid to do so in his tent for fear a plane might come over while he was undressing. Gathering up his clean clothes, he started for the dug-out. Another occupant of the tent asked him why he didn't change clothes in the tent alongside the stove instead of in the cold dug-out. Whereupon he replied: "Fritzie ain't going to catch me with my pants down."

## THIS DOESN'T HAPPEN OFTEN

A bunch of fellows entered a cafe which happened to be owned by an English lady. The spokesman of the party ordered in his very best French "Cinq Bieres." The lady looked at him for a minute and said, much to his astonishment, "How many beers do you want—five?"

## AMERICAN FRENCH

Another fellow tried to ask a French lady for some bread. Instead of saying "Avez-vous du pain," he mixed his French with his American slang and said: "Avez-vous dee punk?"

## A DARK NIGHT

At Flirey some colored troops were camped near us. One day during shell fire one of the negroes was seen breaking world records across the field. One of his friends shouted, "Where is you'all gwine?" The runner replied: "I ain't gwine no place—I'se just taking distance."

## A FAINT HEART NEVER FILLED A SPADE FLUSH

One member of Company "B," native of Russia, whom I shall call Felix, was very superstitious, having also great faith in fortune tellers. Prior to going to France he visited a fortune teller who told him he would die on a certain date from heart trouble. After arriving in France, the supposed date approached. Felix began to experience considerable trouble with his heart. Consult-

ing every medical man he could get in touch with, from a Colonel down to a buck private, none could give him satisfaction. About this time some of his friends decided to work a cure on him. They put one of the sergeants wise and told Felix that he was a fortune teller. The sergeant consulted Felix's service record and found data necessary to facilitate the telling of his fortune.



*German Dugout in use*

A meeting was arranged, Felix walked five kilometers to keep the appointment with the sergeant. After the interview he was in the best of spirits and much happier than he had been for a long time. The sergeant had told him his fortune and postponed the date of his death for many years. Today Felix is one of the most cheerful members of the Company.

## HE'LL GO HOME AND SAY HE CAPTURED IT.

A Lieutenant from a Base Hospital in the S. O. S. visited the front during the St. Mihiel Drive. Accosting a sergeant, he asked numerous questions about activities at the front. Finally he noticed a machine gun lying at the feet of the sergeant. He asked who was the owner. The sergeant told him it was his, that he had carried it ten kilometers intending to send it home as a souvenir. The Lieutenant said he would like to buy it, asking the sergeant if he would take two hundred francs for it. The sergeant said he hated to part with it, after carrying it so far, but if the Lieutenant wanted it enough to pay two hundred francs for it he would let him have it. The Lieutenant promptly handed over the two hundred francs, shouldered his load and walked away. When he was out of sight the sergeant jumped into a trench alongside the road and took his pick from about twenty other machine guns that were lying there.

## NOT RESPONSIBLE AFTER A VISIT TO COMMERCE

A member of Company "B" had been on a visit to Commercy and was about half way home when some one told him that a man had been pulled out of the river. The Co. "B" man, being an ex-coal miner with a knowledge of first aid, figured he might be of some use to resuscitate the drowning man, promptly ran back, about a kilometer, to the scene. Upon arrival he immediately got on top of the man and started to vigorously work his arms and legs in an effort to promote respiration. He kept it up for about an hour when some one volunteered the information that the man had been in the river for four days.



### THREE MUSKETEERS

Three American soldiers, going through the streets of Feronville noticed an old lady sitting in front of her house crying. They inquired the reasons for her distress. By gestures and producing a card from the French war office, she made them understand that two



*Water Tanks at Leonval for Road Sprinkler and Engines*

of her sons had been killed and a third captured. They sympathized with her as best they could. She invited them in to play some hymn music on an old organ. None of them knew anything about hymn music, but one member could chord a little rag time. He played his stock of rag-time music which pleased the old lady more than hymn music would have done. She recovered all her good spirits and insisted that they have supper with her.

### THE SCHOOL OF EXPERIENCE

Two of our fellows returned to the Company, at Dombasle, from the S. O. S., having been absent during all of our thrilling experiences along the front.

A Fritz bomber came over one evening and opened his tail gates on the camp. They went carelessly on their way each with a lantern in quest of some illusive object, convinced that the explosions were from the air craft batteries. Their education was brief and thorough. The next bombing expedition saw them in full and riotous retreat.

### AT THIS RATE THE PRICE OF DOUGHNUTS SHOULD RISE

During a heavy bombardment a member of the company sought refuge in a concrete sewer pipe. Another member came along and offered him a hundred francs for his hole. The offer was promptly rejected.

### A MISUNDERSTANDING

When "B" Company moved from Mareq to Longuyon, they understood that they were to join the "Army of Occupation" and live a life of pleasure such as they read of in the "Stars and Stripes." Upon their arrival at Longuyon a terrible shock awaited them, an issue of brand new shovels. Instead of the life of ease they spent their time cleaning up some of the wealth that the French had left.

Maxim: A Frenchman's wealth is judged by the size of his manure pile.

### ALL MEN ARE EQUAL IN AN AIR RAID

One afternoon thirty or forty Hun planes came over the camp. Lieut. Dun and Sgts. Sherman and Devine made a hasty exit from the Yard Office. Sherman found a large shell hole and vainly tried to assume the proportions of a snail. Devine and Lieut. Dun came running to the same hole. Van raised objection to his visitors, "If they see so many of us they will surely try for us. Now you fellows stay here and I will look for another shell hole." Van got nicely settled in his new location when in came Lieut. Dun and Devine. Without explanations Van ran for another one, only to be followed again. In disgust he got out of the hole and wished all sorts of bad luck on his visitors when out they came. The planes were almost directly overhead by now. Lieut. Dunn saw a pile of sectional rails over a small hole. He made a dive into it and to his sorrow found that "Doughboys" aren't at all responsible.

### HARD TO GRASP

You will find it hard to sleep on a bombproof bunk because you sleep hard.

### PERPETUAL MOTION

German bombing planes had been coming over Sorey Camp quite regularly at night. On such occasions the tunnel under the railroad and canal was the popular rendezvous. It was about half a kilometer from camp. One morning a negro stevedore, as he dragged himself about his work, was heard to remark. "Boys, it shure am what dat man Sherman done said it was. Work like hell all day, and run like hell all night."

### HARD TO KEEP TRACK OF

One of the lads in the operating department is still trying to locate the town of Decauville.

### WELL TRAINED

A group of colored troops had put in a hard morning on the track. The captain in charge asked Sambo if he was ready to go in for lunch. "Yes, suh, Yas, suh, I always keep muhself prepared."

### SOME BANQUET

Several officers were boasting of various escapades and champagne dinners they had had while in France. As no one contradicted them, they probably exaggerated considerably. Lieut. Signer, who had been a silent auditor finally lost patience and said to the others. "Before you guys were dry behind the ear I attended a banquet where we had at least ten corks in the air all the time." This broke up the assemblage.

### A ROOKIE LIEUTENANT

A lieut, new to the army, was drilling the men one day, and having the men lined up in Company Front, gave the Command Squads Right! not a man moved. He repeated in a louder tone, Squads Right, still they did not move. A captain standing near remarked "Give them the Command of Execution." The lieut. promptly commanded, "Squads Right, Command of Execution." This was too much for the men and they gave him the ha ha.

## THEM MULES MUST BE FED

A number of mules were unloaded at Sorey and no arrangements had been made to feed them. When Colonel Slifer heard of this, he ordered one of his men to arrange with the Q.M.C. Officer for feed. The Q.M.C. Officer refused to furnish the hay upon the first request. This was duly reported to the colonel who grabbed the phone, whereupon the following conversation took place:

Col: "Why won't you furnish hay for those mules?"

Q.M.C. Officer: "We have no orders to feed them as they are not divisional mules."

Col: "I don't give a D—— whether they are divisional mules or Regimental mules (Loud) they are army mules and them mules are going to eat!! and if not, I am going to find out why!!! Understand?"

Bang goes the receiver.

The mules were fed.

## 21ST MULES

*By Max Foster, Co. B*

Mules were used in the grading work at Sorey yard after which they were attached to B Company for rations and duty. Here they hauled water and rations when moving camp. At Flirey when the roads were so congested that it took many hours to move a mile, hauling water was a tedious job. The mules were usually obliged to sleep in mud and often missed their feed. But after the armistice, like the men, their conditions improved. They were well fed and had a good stable. They often went A.W.O.L. and were used by any outfit that found them. Their only identification tag was a number on the hoof.

The mule possesses many soldier-like qualities, he is always ready for his feed and is a good kicker. Most mules can kick a cigarette out of your mouth. They are extremely disliked by the army blacksmiths who shoe



*Arriving in France*



*Six Months Later*



*Departing for the U. S. A.*

## HE BELIEVED IN GERMAN SIGNS

The sergeant major, upon being asked what hotel he stopped at while visiting Metz, replied "Hotel Eingang," producing a photograph of the establishment. Upon close inspection it was discovered that "Eingang," which means entrance in German, was on a small sign over the doorway. But in large plain letters Hotel National was painted across the front of the building.

## IT WAS CONFUSING

One thick night at Mandres, brother Bosche was entertaining the boys with a gas and shrapnel serenade. Bob Lee was seen without his gas mask and when questioned whether he did not smell gas said that he detected a slight odor of melons but had attributed that to a detachment of colored labor troops which had just passed by.

them as it is sometimes a dangerous operation.

The mule plays an important part in the army, and is subject to many dangerous tasks. He carries a gas mask while near the front, and has an operation performed on the nose that takes away his bray. Mules are used generally in teams of four, or to carry packs. A mule team is supposed to haul 3,000 lbs. on any road. They are rationed by the army like men, that is to say, their substance consists of a fixed number of pounds of oats per day and is drawn from the Q.M.C., once a week. However, it is often necessary to forage around the country so that they may be properly fed.

The private has a certain amount of sympathy for him, a feeling of kinship as it were. On the battlefield, especially in the Argonne, many of them were lying dead side by side with the soldiers and one could not but have an overwhelming sorrow for their comrades in service, who had given their lives for their country.



## VERDUNDO INFERNO

*By William Enscoe.*

Hard by the Tunnel de Tavannes,  
Where grave on grave is piled,  
Where France has huddled to her breast  
Her genius like a child,  
There dwelt five gentle soldiers  
And a desperado wild.

Sing a song of dynamite,  
Sing it good and hard;  
Five little soldier men  
Scorched and singed and scarred.

Just a little carelessness  
Let the stove lid fall  
Right on top the dynamite—  
Bower did it all.

A quarter to nine,  
Approximate time,  
Sergeant Gear had departed and gone down the line.

Bower arises, shaves his beard, combs his head,  
While the four other inmates slept gently in bed.

The stove does not act right; fire almost out.  
So Bower, the reckless, the stupid, the lout  
Attempts to induce it to burn up again  
By feeding a few dynamite chips, and then  
Quaintly sets fire to a whole pile of them.  
Damn!  
What a sight!  
What a fright!  
Bower seeks safety in speediest flight.  
Hark!  
How the flames roar  
Up from the dynamite chips on the floor!  
See them flicker,  
Fetzner, be quicker,  
Else you'll be sicker  
Than ever before,  
Allah be praised! He wakes from his doze,  
Luckily clad in his olive drab clothes.  
Cuss words neurotic,  
Weird and exotic  
Stream from his lips in a torrent chaotic.  
Nerves all a-twitter  
In a blue funk,  
Removing three slats from an overhead bunk  
With his head,  
The brave Ed  
Quits his bed,  
And then, like an arrow unerringly sped,  
Through the smoke and the fire-girdled doorway has fled.

One man is safe and an audible sigh  
Is heaved by the crowd that is hovering nigh.  
Three men inside, so the crowd holds its breath  
While these other poor devils do battle with death.

Hell!  
Who can tell  
How they came tumbling,  
Stumbling,  
Grumbling,  
Out of the shack pell-mell.

What is that crash, man?  
The bulk of the corpulent Ashman,  
Who rolls from his bunk to the pebbly floor.  
Rises and dashes barefoot through the door.  
See him shiver,  
Quiver,  
Like a man walking a rope o'er a river.  
Hear him bleat  
As his feet,  
Loaded with two hundred ten pounds of meat,  
Are gashed by the rocks that profusely abound  
On the ground  
All around,  
Whose corners and edges his poor feet have found.

Blind and unseeing and all unaware  
Of table, steel, bench, buckets, boxes and chair,  
The bold sergeant major comes out of his lair  
With gestures dramatic

And footsteps erratic,  
Receiving en route a nice singe for his hair.  
His garb is conspicuous,  
Highly ridiculous;  
He's clad in a shirt and remarkable drawers;  
The latter are baggy,  
Roomy and saggy,  
The kind worn by soldiers who go to the wars.  
Like Oscar, he's barefoot and suffers a bruise  
On the heel, and he hollers, "For Christ's sake, some shoes."  
But his woes are forgotten, for all realize  
That wee Willie Enscoe is on the inside.

Suspense!  
Immense!!  
Intense!!!  
Will he come hence?

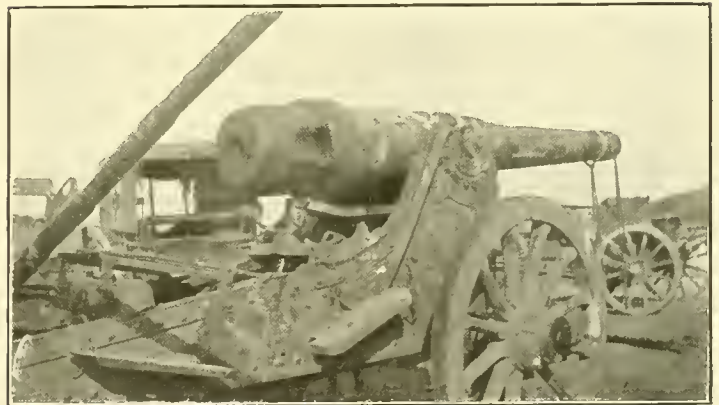
Yes, for he wakes with a start of surprise  
And views the inferno with terrified eyes.  
The heat is terrific. It scorches and sears  
Blisters pop out on his nose and his ears.  
His moustache is shriveled, his visage is scarred.  
His wild, youthful beauty is hopelessly marred.  
He makes a wild dash through the doorway to where  
His comrades await him in more temperate air.

The flames soon subside and peace reigns once more  
Where all was confusion ten minutes before.  
They bandage the victims and rub vaseline  
On thirty square inches of Bill's blistered bean.  
The poor lad weeps bitterly—cannot be cheered.  
The fire has singed all his immature beard.  
But Bower,  
Bad Bower—  
In hell may he fidget—  
Escaped with a burn on his thumb and his digit.

Say,  
That was a day.

### L'envoi

He lit a fire with dynamite,  
It acted mighty fine;  
He burns up all the new washed clothes  
A-hanging on the line.  
He spoiled poor Oscar's mackinaw,  
And made him skin his heel;



*Captured German Guns, Sorey Gare*

He blistered Enscoe's baby face  
And caused his skin to peel.  
He singed the hair of Robbery Myers  
And scared him out of bed,  
He woke Ed Fetzner from his nap  
And made him skin his head.  
This Bower is a wicked cuss,  
This Bower is a brute;  
He lit a fire with dynamite,  
It burned—beyond dispute.

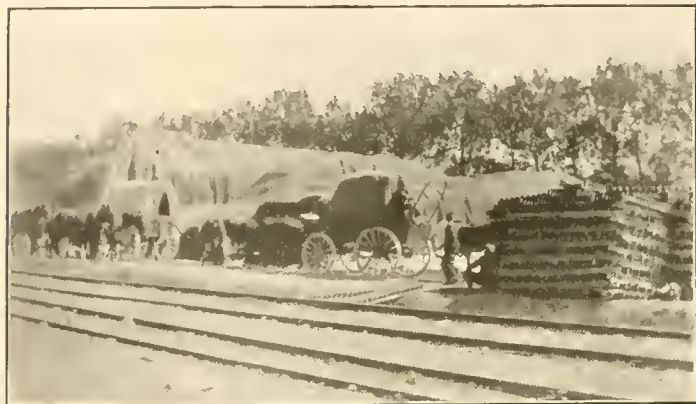
### WHAT WE CALLED OUR RAILROAD

Soixante, Narrow Gauge, Slim Gauge, Narrow-  
Minded Railroad, Little Railroad, Light Railroad, 60  
Centimeter, Dinky, Chermin de Fer Petit, S. M. & B.  
(Sorey, Metz & Berlin).

## A SPY HUNT IN THE LA REINE FOREST

Company "A."

It was a pitch dark night in March, 1918. Some men of the 23rd Engineers had reported seeing lights flashing in the woods and the cry of "spy" was soon circulating in the camp at Gerard Sas. A detail volunteered to in-



*Loading Hay and Oats for the Front*

vestigate. After some time of anxious waiting a volley of rifle fire was heard in the woods but none of the detail returned; another detail set out to get the first and after another period of waiting both details finally returned together—empty handed. It was then learned that the lights seen were signals to allied planes coming across the lines and the light that had been fired upon was a star shell sent up at the front and but dimly seen through the leaves by the "spy detail."

### SOUVENIRS

The Kaiser is the guy that started all the fuss,  
But when time came to stop it they put it up to us.  
Yanks all answered to the call without doubts or fears;  
They tore the Kaiser's playhouse down and stole his souvenirs.

He then went to Holland and took up his abode  
There, loathed and spurned by all mankind, like a vile poison toad.

And by chance you ask him the cause of his downfall,  
He'll shake his head and answer, "Yanks and souvenirs did it all."

For the Frenchman fights for the honor,  
The Englishman fights for great fame,  
The Yankees fight for souvenirs,  
But the results are just the same.

And now that the war is over, and the future looms so bright,  
To get our treasures home may start another fight.  
But visions of marching up the main pike amid the lusty cheers  
Spurs us on to return to you with all our souvenirs.

### THE MOON SHINES BRIGHT AND STILL THE NIGHT WAS DARK

One clear night when the moon cast its luminous mel-low rays over the entire Argonne front, Jerry was giving us merry hell. Shells and bombs had been bursting from time to time in the open field a short distance from Taylor Junction. A negro came running up the tracks. I called to him and asked if anyone was hurt. "No, Boss, they nobody hurt, they ain't gonna be nobody hurt, 'cause they ain't nobody hurt, they ain't gonna be nobody hurt,

When asked if they were hitting close, he replied: 'cause they ain't nobody theah."

SHILLING, COMPANY D.

## A PERMISSION

*G. D. Ingells, Corp. Ord.*

I say "A" permission, for fortunate is the soldier who receives more than one; and anyway, the first is the red letter leave. A plain buck civilian could never realize what a leave means to a plain buck private, especially when he has wrestled with beans and near coffee at the front for months. Granted, there is plenty of excitement, but it's like love, you can't live on it all the time, mon derby. Oh, for just a touch of domestic life and a real derby in sight and a piece of blue serge on the horizon. That is what one wishes and looks forward to on a permission, and also to forget for once all that is military.

Five weeks before going on said leave it is necessary to go through a short course in training. Your knife and spoon are taken away from you entirely so that you may become once more proficient in the use of the fork. Bal-ancing peas and beans on a knife becomes a lost art, meat is eaten in small morsels, not in large relays, and soup once more is said to be noiseless. You are taught that hotel napkins are not handkerchiefs, finger bowls are not to drink from, and not to steal your neighbor's pie. Never line up for meals at a hotel and leave all dishes and silver-ware on the table, as it might embarrass the hostess. These are the essential rules.

Then I really left for the area on one of those third-class French trains. Yes, I did—not. I put on my bib and tucker and hied myself hence to a genuine first-class coach where I concealed myself with O. D. splendour until the train got on the move, then I was "jake." It seems as though the M.P.'s and A.P.M.'s are crazy to take the joy out of life. It is just one battle royal all the way to your destination. You sign here, sign there, stand frozen in lines till you get so d—— mad that you long for the front again so you can fight. Then when they hustle you to a cold, cheerless, third-class coach again you keep going right on through the other side and board a second-class coach, where you ride in civilized comfort to Monte Carlo or Menton.

Real sunshine, blue sky, mountains and pretty women all around you. Women, think of it! Real honest to you, black-eyed men-loving women. I'll never say another word against woman, I—— Then they took me to a marble-topped hotel with palm trees around it. This was too much, I could hardly stand it. Next through a sort of mist, I saw a garcon fading from my chamber and there, there beside me, resting in quietude, was the nicest, sofest, whitest, cleanest, most welcome feather bed I've seen since I kissed the girl with the soft-boiled eyes at home. Oh, woe is me, I just dove at it and said: "You old son-of-a-gun, you're sure going to see service this week." Then I started to feel the dignity of the occasion and riz up and made my toilette, get that "made my toilette." I'll be saying darn next.

After watching the rest, I managed to get through the first meal with my fork, and left all the silverware on the table, but I think the matron suspicioned me. I slicked up for my evening promenade. "James, the gloves and cane please. Auvoir, garcon," and I was off. Now just imagine me, a buck private, two hours later, as it were, on the boulevard. Three shots of "Muscato" neath my webbed belt, shoes shined, four months pay (and all I could borrow), a new moon on the horizon of the Medi-terranean, the Alps above me, and the prettiest, gol darn-dest, petite little French Mademoiselle along side of me





you ever peeped at. (Play "Home, Sweet Home" here.) We were in one of those carriages that they haul presidents of nations around in, you know, with the patent leather fenders. I don't know how you feel but something seemed to tell me that I was happy. I don't believe I had ever seen so many cafes or passed so many and all this time I had her, gol darn her, right alongside of me, looking so adventuresome. Then we "throws our anchor" and I paid the driver the customary exorbitant American price. I didn't know whether to hit the driver or kiss the girl. Which would you do? I did.

Then we went to Freddy's place and while she drank hot chocolate, I maneuvered with light wines and their accessories until we went home, where I kissed her on the doorstep with welcome on the mat.

That was my first evening and just add six more to that dream with diminishing francs each night and that will constitute the average permission. Of course, I saw the usual sights in the vicinity, such as the Casino, Princess's Palace, etc. One day some of us hired asses driven by Italian girls and took a trip up the mountains. We came back on our asses about five o'clock after a most scenic trip.

I don't believe I ever enjoyed food as much as I did there. I never passed either restaurant or cafe. It was considered nearly the same as breaking a general order to do so. On the first day you tip everyone a franc, on the seventh (and there was light) it's two sous limit, and

that's no joke. Then on the seventh evening, you walk weakly and faintly over to the A.P.M., check out, nestle yourself coldly in a permissioner train. You can't escape them this time, they've got you tight. You just pass out of Monte Carlo, nobody makes any fuss over you and life is gloomy. You're made because you can't stay and at the same time you kinda want to get back and see the boys in the mud.

Then you get back to camp, broke, glad to see the fellows. Maybe we're going home. Everything looks strange to you for a while, then mess call sounds and you come back to earth again, a plain buck private. No more salade on lettuce leaves, no oysters on the half shell, cows don't give milk here, your meat can is nothing but aluminum. Well, what's it to you? I can stand the gaff if the rest can. How do ya get that way, go to the end of the line.

#### POOR CAMOUFLAGE

An engineer passed an officer and failed to salute.

Officer: "Don't you salute Officers?"

Engineer: "Yes, sir."

Officer: "Do it."

Engineer: Suppressing a smile, salutes.

Officer: "Are you trying to show your contempt for me?"

Engineer: "No, sir, I am trying to conceal it."



## ELEMENTARY ARITHMETIC

Q. If 100 soldats can build 1 kilometer of voie de soixante in 10 hours, how long would it take 1,000 soldats?

A. One hour (provided half of them are not killed colliding with one another).

Q. If a detail of 20 men can erect an Adrian bar-



*Operator's Shack, Brousssey*

racks in 13 hours, what would result if 67 men were employed at the same task.

A. Seven would be killed by the frame falling on them because 19 men would cause it to collapse. Eleven of these nineteen men would break 1 leg each, the remaining 8 would die from various wounds. Of the 41 remaining, 32 would execute parade rest in double time and the other 9 would complete the building in 99 hours, 30 minutes.

Q. What can you get for 1 can of corned beef?

A. Quite a lot generally. (See G.O. 45).

Q. If you went to the warehouse for 12 monkey wrenches and 8 claw hammers, what would you get?

A. 1 stillson, 1 foot-adz, 3 sets chain blocks, 2 claw-bars, 9 lining bars, 1 track level, 2 Sears-Roebuck hatchets, 3-8 lb. sledges (without handles), 1 axe handle for same, 1 bicycle pump, 2 condiment cans, 1 French gas mask, 5 shovels, 2 picks, 1 gate valve, Hell, and a keg of spikes.

Q. Suppose the Regimental Supply Sergeant were to go to the Supply Office at 7:30 A.M.?

A. Oh, H——! Agnes, what's the use of supposing anything like that?

Q. Who won the war?

A. Nix! nix! We want to go home.

## CYLINDER-BORE PANTS, A SABLE IN FLANG

*M. E. Wadsworth*

In view of the fact that we are to be returned to the States in the near future (you may fire when ready, Gridley) it devolves upon us to endeavor to present a respectable appearance.

To more nobly fit us for that happy occasion, our uncle with customary taste and foresight has decided to issue us breach-loading pantaloons of large calibre and with 31½ inch barrels. Model of 1861.

Now, of course, if a man's sitting boom is high enough off the ground, the muzzles will fall above his shootops, and he will be able to twist on a pair of Burlap spirals leaving only a slight balloon effect above the knees, his

lower limb (meaning leg) having the appearance of not having been broken in more than nine places.

But! On the other hand, if his inseam in civil life was 23½ inches, he finds himself confronted by the necessity of either double-reefing the garment above the well-known spirals or hewing off the superfluous parts at the bottom, thus the better fitting them for the wearers use, with a sharp instrument, as an axe.

We think (honest we do, but not often) that quite probably the architect of this infamous item of wearing apparel was awarded the D.S.M. and 10,000 dollars or so, as a Bonus.

We are too much of a gentleman to suggest what he should have got and just where he should have got it.

Moral: You're in the army yet!

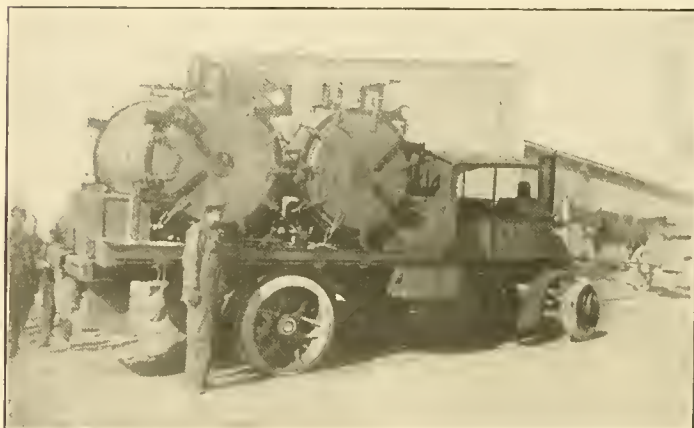
## THE COMPANY BUGLER

*By Bugler William Sutton, Co. M*

Just a few words on my ability as a bugler, from my personal observation. From remarks that I hear, my bugling must not be very good. After blowing one of the numerous calls, someone sticks his head out of the window and yells, "Hang it up and let the wind blow through it." Another asks if that was the sick call. I tell him "No," and inform him as to its meaning. He then says: "I thought it was the sick call—anyway, it makes me sick." The lieutenant sitting comfortably in his room, hearing me endeavoring to blow "first call," says to his orderly: "What in hell was that?"

There are two reasons for such a condition. One is, I frankly admit, I am not a good bugler. The other, there is not a man in the company that knows one call from the other, with the exception of mess and pay call, so what is the use of having a good bugler anyway? Sometimes it is necessary for the top sergeant to climb three flights of stairs to wake me in the morning, but I don't mind a little thing like that.

There is always some good in everything, so I will



*This Machine is Certain Death for the Trench Petite To-Tos, also Found on American Soldiers*

mention some of the advantages of being a bugler. I am not burdened with a rifle which takes considerable care and spare time to keep it in condition. I escape all drilling and all details. To sum it all up: "It has to be did." The job was wished on me, so I am either fortunate or unfortunate as the case may be.



## WHY THE "SHOCKERS" STOOD REVEILLE

After headquarters had enjoyed a comparative life of ease and luxury for several months the Colonel appeared on the scene and read the riot act. Among other reforms, headquarters, to which the shock troops were attached, was obliged to stand reveille and physical torture. Upon hearing the new edict, the "shockers" decided, while under the spell of vin blink, that unless personally invited they would not obey the new orders.

Morning presently came, the bugle sounded and the "top" gave the command "breathing exercise in four counts, eyeballs left, eyeballs right, one, two, three, four." The small group of conscientious soldiers were dismissed and the shockers were still in their virtuous couches. Encouraged by their procedure, they continued ignoring the orders for a week. Sleep until you rot or get hungry was their motto. But, alas! the whole personnel of headquarters got into the same habit and one cold snowy morn found the "Top Cutter" the only attendant until Capt. Radford appeared on the scene. The Captain was usually late, so he did not register a kick, but when no one was there to see him come late he got hard boiled. With blood in his eyes he started on a crusade, making a dash to the domicile of the shockers, he entered the room which looked like a boar's nest as the hard-boiled shockers had a "celebration" the night before. Olie, the blonde motorcycle wizard who lost his wheel base, was the only one up, and with nothing on but his underwear, socks and a cigarette, he presented a poor "January Morn" as he hugged the fire.

Like a true soldier he shouted "attention!" as the Captain and top cutter entered the room, which was answered only by loud and melodious snoring.

"Where's your physical exercise, get up!" Olie now had his breeches at half mast as he tried to hastily dress and conceal his amusement "What's your name?" "Wagoner Esterburg, Sir," he replied. By this time there was a stir under the blankets, for uneasy lies the head that bears the wrath of the commanding officer. With a vehement demand to "Get up!" he dashed to each bed pulling the blankets off. Seeing the master engineer chevrons on the undershirt of Forbes, the Captain waxed eloquent. "You a master engineer," said he, "should be a shining example for these privates."

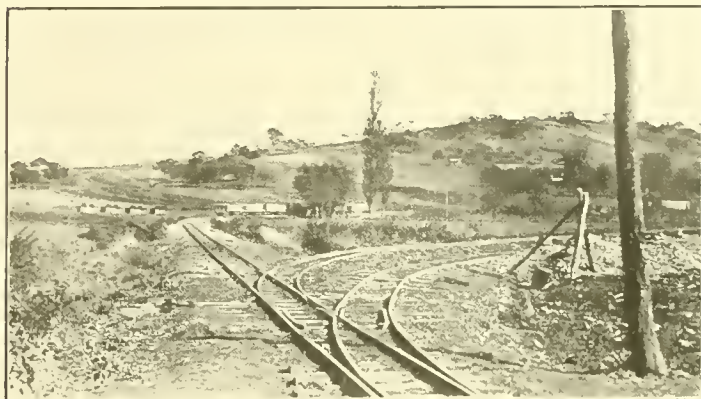
The shockers were now industriously dressing when



*View of Broussay, Longmore and Mont Sec in the Distance*

the Captain espied a form in the farthest couch. In a rage he rushed toward it and lifting the covers found a foot and from the smell was convinced that it belonged to a human. The Captain almost became violent, but he contained himself behind his glasses.

The culprit under the blankets proved to be Justin P. Smith of Germany, where he was attached to various prison camps. After facing the German prison keeper, he was not perturbed by the outburst of our Captain. Leaving the "top cutter" to take their names, the Captain retired from the room. The next morning found our



*Cornieville Yard From West End*

heroes doing a breathing exercise in a-a-ah—one, two, three, four.

## THE FRANC BOYS IN PARIS

Once there were two boys and they'd been in the army a heluva long while and had beaucoup d'argent and wanted to go on leave and they did and they took the night train for Nancy and rode the baggage car with the rest of the smells, I mean swells, and got into Nancy just in time to get a drink, a girl and a walk in the open air which muchly refreshed them and they went to bed and got up by themselves in the morning, that is they needed no help and then they swilled, I mean swelled around the town and had a dinner at a restaurant and every time they saw a white shirt they gave it twenty francs and then they bought a sea-going bus and went to see and what they saw is history and has no place in fiction and the next morning they took a train to Paris and went through the accounts and found they had gone through a thousand francs and Beaucoup he says to Combien, not a bad start for a trip to Paris and Nancy is only a small town.

And they hit Paris, but the town withstood the attack and they captured a taxi and he hunted through his dictionary to find out where they wanted to go and they got there at last and went in and climbed up seven flights of stairs and were just able to get the bell rung and they went inside and kissed the girls and then went back down stairs to get their breath as Beaucoup had seen a place where they could get it back to normal and there they met Johnny Walker and took him home to sup or soup with them and Johnny started a crap game and Combien he shot craps and says come 7 ah a natural and all the rest of the approved dialect and he won and the boys had money for another day and they went home and Combien wanted to climb Eiffel Tower but the guards said it was too dark and anyway defendu and they went to a hole in the wall to sleep and pair for their taxi which was tres reasonable, only 200 francs.

And the next morning they got 'em a taxi and it was Christmas, so they filled it with 200 francs worth of flowers and 500 francs worth of P&G and they went forth to carry the tidings of the season to the ladies. The flowers

were for the ladies and the other essential for themselves as a Xmas present so to speak and a precaution against getting out of breath again.

And they had dinner and the dinner was good and after dinner Beaucoup got sleepy and talked in his drowsy way to a fair little L O P that is to say in strictly spencerian



*Ammunition Dump Beyond Boucq*

English, life of the party, and she proved it. And they took the taxi that had been standing without, that is without being paid, and they went hunting, hunting for a dance and finding none they just hunted and they found food and drink at various places and when they went back to their hole in the wall they found two frogs in their beds and they could not tell them to get the hell out in their own language, that is in the language of the frog, so they went walking and got downtown and found a place where they knew that forgotten art of brewing an absinthe annisette and they inhaled deeply and broadly and went out to breakfast on benedictine and chartruese, as they were on a strictly liquid diet.

And they gave a dinner that day that cost 600 francs and took their taxi and spent another hundred or so in sight seeing and took dinner at a famous cafe where to induce the orchestra to play American music so the Americans could dance, they slipped them at odd moments something of the name of species and the orchestra was theirs and they left 500 francs there as a memento. And the days came and the francs went and the leave came to an end and the francs likewise and they went back to work and to reflect that the francs don't last long when you use P&G and Poddo Flips as a wash water or do settlement work with benedictine.

### "COOTIES" I HAVE KNOWN

*C. S. Elliott*

Early last spring Sergeant Hack and myself were sent up to Broussey to open up a block office. We had been there several days when we both began to be troubled with crawling sensations. We "read our shirts" several time but without results. Finally one day when Tack had scratched himself raw in several places, he made the remark that he had found some cooties. I took his remark very seriously and began another search, when he commenced to laugh and said he had been joking. Then turning around to a doughboy out of the 103rd Infantry, who was on guard outside, Hack asked him what a cootie looked like. The doughboy was much surprised. "Why didn't you ever see one?" he remarked, "I've got a million of them. Let me see if I can't find one for you." He then turned back his sleeve and carefully examined the inside of his undershirt sleeve, and sure enough he located a nice full grown specimen.

Hack examined him very carefully and then remarked, "I am going to look in the same place, maybe I can find one," and he turned back his sleeve as the doughboy had done and much to his surprise found one of his own very much alive and kicking. Hack was a clean sort of fellow and he took it very hard at first, particularly after a number of cootie brothers and sisters had been found. We never could decide on the parents, although we were rather suspicious of several of the larger members of the family. As I remember it, we did not examine into their nationality, as at the time the theory had not yet been evolved that they were German spies smuggled across the line to secure information and to harass the enemy. As a matter of self defence however, we took no prisoners, causing them great casualties and discomfort and finally totally exterminated them. It was a hard fight though.

### A FOOL'S PARADISE

*C. S. Elliott*

There was a lot of us that were scared the morning when the shells started breaking in the woods near "D" Co.'s barracks at Neuf Etang. I had just about decided that my time had come, and that Fritz had a shell with my name on it. I made up my mind to give him a run for his money though, so I started out and never did stop until I got to the cherry orchard upon the hill half way to Boucq. I saw a friend from El Paso later that day and he was shaking his head mournfully and saying: "I have been living in a fool's paradise (Cornieville); my peace of mind is forever destroyed. Oh, no, the Germans can't shell Cornieville, like hell they can't." Thereupon he turned around and started working madly upon the new dugout which he had commenced that day shortly after daylight.

### SICK CALL

To the wearer of khaki, sick call hath many charms, especially when it is raining and outside work is to be done. Few, indeed, are the men who have not, at one time or another, gone on the festive sick call. Registering your name with the "Top Cutter," who puts it in the sick book,



*Near Boucq*

you are conducted to the infirmary by this popular company here.

The medic may have been a bank cashier or a section hand in civilian life, consequently his knowledge of medicine is limited. He asks a number of stock questions prescribed by the Medico's Manual, "How did you sleep?"



Do you cough much? Do you eat well? Do your bowels move?" and others in the same strain. After going through the third degree, he will order you to roll your eyes, put out your tongue, say "ah." Also several stunts that would do credit to an acrobat. Upon completion of this examination, he will give you some large white, some small white and some O.D. pills. You take the large ones every hour, the O.D.'s after each meal, and if you wake up during the night a small white one. He will diagnose your case as "shoveletitus," send you out in the mud and rain to exercise a shovel. No matter what ails you, be it concussion of the brain or a cut finger, you get the same ration of pills. If, however, you break your leg, you may get a dose of castor oil.

It is indeed a forlorn bunch of soldiers that marches or limps to the infirmary. Long faces, bent backs, game legs, bandaged jaws, are everywhere in evidence.

But, how different coming back! The lucky few who have been marked "quarters" marches with firm strides, a lamb-like look spread over their homely self-conscious faces which only a few minutes before presented a picture of physical distress. The chap who was marked "light duty" is busy devising a limp or cough that will persuade the "top" that sawing wood or sweeping would prove fatal. The poor bum actors who are marked "duty" have lost their now unnecessary limp. They are resigned to their fate and console themselves with the fact that half the morning has gone by and they have a legitimate excuse for being late for detail.

### THE SHELLING OF BOUCQ

Amos D. Jones, one of the many veteran engineers who though old enough to have sons in the army, are still young enough to get into the game themselves, tells of a narrow escape he had the day the Germans dropped a few "G.I. Cans" into Boucq, killing 17 French soldiers, injuring several Americans and causing the civilian population to gather their cows, goats, donkeys, and other domestic animals and worldly possessions together and flee for a more peaceful climate. Amos was in Boucq that Sunday sightseeing when he was suddenly interrupted by



*View of Barracks Occupied by 21st Engineers, Gievres*

the sounds of bursting shells in his immediate vicinity. It seems to be instinctive for a person to make for home in case of emergency, so Amos immediately made a mad dash for his detachment at Neuf Etang.

"I was just at the bottom of the hill below the town," he afterward explained, "when, whiz-z-z—I heard a shell

coming. Regardless of two or three inches of water in the ditch along the side of the road, I flopped into it. The shell landed about two hundred yards behind me, and I could hear distinctly the shrapnel singing overhead after it had broken. The fact that the shell lit behind me gave me the idea that I was going the right direction, when



*View of Sorcy Gare*

whiz-z-z, I heard another one coming. As before, I dove into the ditch, mud and all. This one, however, broke about two hundred yards in front of me. While I was undecided whether to go forward or back, whiz-z-z, still another one was coming over. I didn't have very far to jump this time as I was hugging that ditch pretty close, and I had no sooner flopped on my face when bang! She landed less than one hundred feet off the side of the road. Well, boys, I had my steel helmet on, and I'll swear that the force of the concussion of that shell simply blew that heavy steel helmet completely off my head as I lay still in that ditch."

At this point one of the wits of the company spoke up:

"Now, Amos, you can't make us believe that it was the **CONCUSSION** that blew your hat off. You was just so blamed seared that your hair simply **PUSHED** that heavy steel lid off your blamed head."

"There's where your wrong again, my lad," said Amos triumphantly, and by way of proof, he pulled off the steel bonnet in question and showed a head **AS BALD AS A BILLIARD BALL**.

### RELATIVE TO "SUBS"

*By C. S. Elliott*

I used to have a youngster in my squad, a good natured, happy go lucky sort of fellow, and not very energetic, who I shall call Jones, though it is not his right name. On the way across on the President Grant, I used to have a great deal of trouble getting him started moving when we had our abandon ship drills. He would lay on his bunk until the aisle was cleared before getting up, claiming it was too much trouble to move out with the crowd. One day after we had ship drill, suddenly there came a second alarm with bells ringing and whistle blowing. "Boys, this sounds like the real thing this time," I said, "let's go," and before I had the words out of my mouth, young Jones was out of his bunk, out in the aisle and up the ladder like a shot out of a gun, and I was a close second, too, with a very peculiar feeling around the pit of my stomach. This goes to show what incentive will do.

## ADDRESSED TO HIM PERSONALLY

*B. C. S. Elliott*

June 16, 1918 was a very exciting day in the old Sector "Northwest of Toul." There had been rumors for a week or two of an impending German attack and the men up around Nauginsard and Raulecourt had been a bit nervous too. The barrage opened about 3 A.M. and it was a right nice little barrage. "Bad-eye Dick" and "Desperate Ambrose" of "D" Company were at that time at Broussey as block operators and lived in an elephant iron hut opposite the Wye. "Bad-eye" says that he and "Desperate Ambrose" were out in front of the hut listening to the shells come over when they heard one which sounded unusually close. They made a run for the hut, followed by an M.P. and a "Frog." Every one made it but the Frog, who was just entering the door when the shell struck in the middle of the road and exploded. The force of the explosion threw the frog into the hut onto his face knocking the breath out of him but did not injure him in any way.

A few minutes later another shell struck a building across the street, passed through a couple of partitions, hit the floor in a room at the far end of the building, bounced up in the air and landed in a "Frogs" bed without exploding. The "Frog" who slept there, according to "Bad-Eye" was outside watching the fireworks, and shortly afterwards remembered that he had left his gas mask on the bed. He went back to the room and found a 5-in. shell on the bed with the nose stuck just inside the flap of the gas mask. He began to get scared then and he beat it for the dugout for the rest of the night.

## ROOKIES' NIGHTS ON THE FRONT

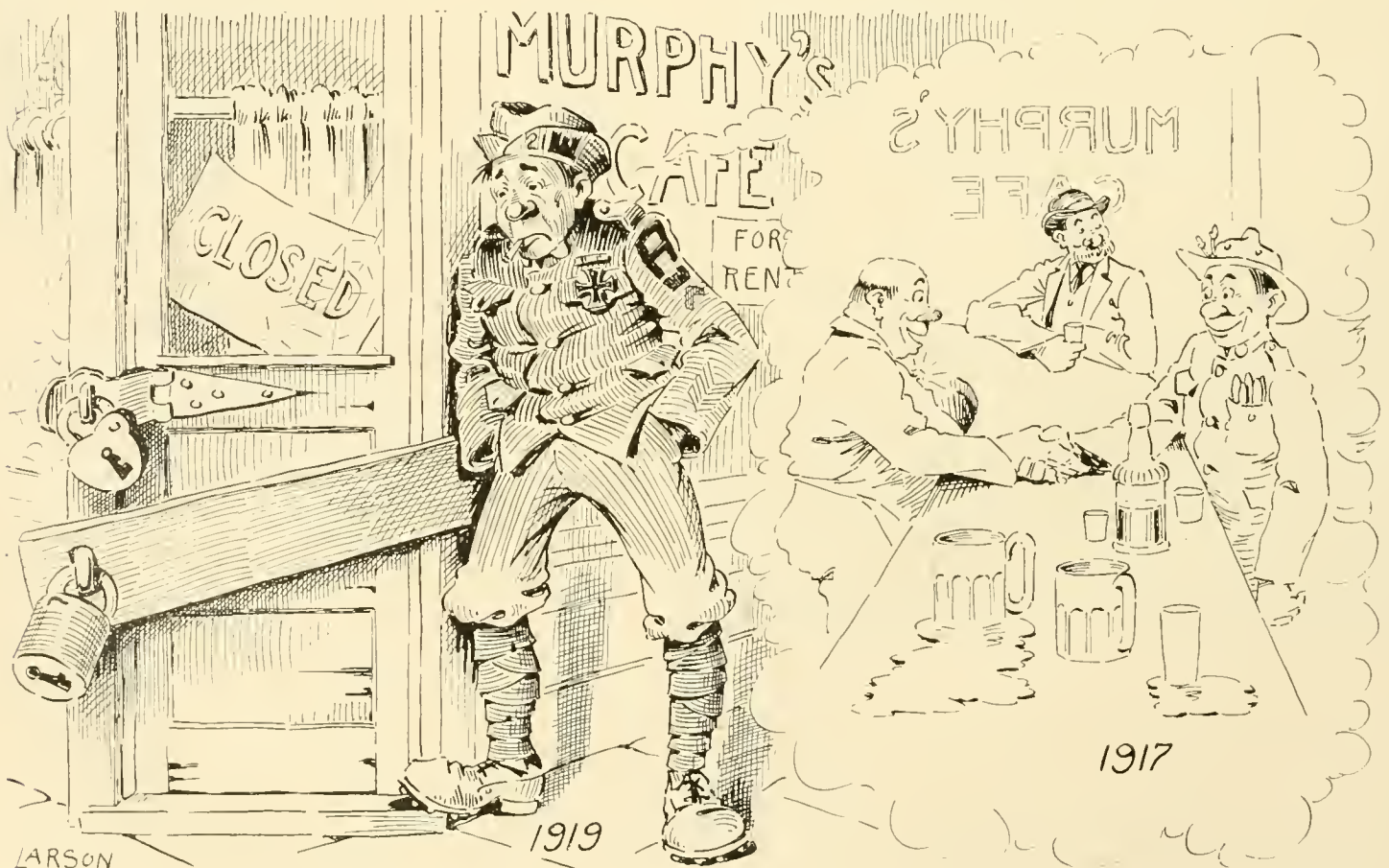
One time during the Spring of 1918, we were still learning to operate the Soixante, a Company E and a French train crew were up near Bernecourt. It was after dark and as usual a few shells were "coming in" now and then. Suddenly everything became quiet. As a general rule the French are very talkative. But this time they were so quiet that the American crew walked up to the engine to see what was wrong—and every one of the Frenchmen were sitting very still with their gas masks on. The American tin hats commenced flying and on with gas masks in double quick time, accelerated, no doubt, by a few "H. E." and gas shells which were then commencing to come over.

After all, she was a "Bon" Sector in those days.

## THE ENEMY WAS EVER ON THE LOOKOUT

*Bartlett Schilling, Co. D*

One night three trains were taking rations at Mont-faucon. There was a tractor on each end of the trains and the leading tractor in the first train had left the rails. The engine on the rear end and the weight of the cars turned the derailed engine completely around to clear the track. The following trains came up, the men got their lanterns and went to assist in the difficulty. A Hun balloon scented something unusual and promptly got a couple of guns to working. Before the first shell bursted there wasn't a lantern to be found there. But the damage had been done and a dozen shells were sent over before Fritz felt appeased for the carelessness of the affront.





## YE OLDE PAY DAY

*By G. D. Ingells, Corp. Ord.*

What ho, said the sergeant as twice the bugler blasted recall across the silverish meadows of Sorey, and seizing my leathern jerkin in my horny hand, I sped nimbly toward the barrack in a goodish fashion. E'en then 'twere 4:30 and as pay-call had thrice blown that afternoon two hundred well rounded, odd franes nestled as neatly in my pocket as a covey of quail in the new mown hay. 'Twas considered great strategy in these days to be first in the line of hungry men, so grasping my armoured mess kit, I perked with my hairy chest exposed to the warm September zephyrs, to the cook who with vigor of unwontedness and seeming indifference, threw a scantling of beans and a piece of beef into my platter. I hastened half a stones throw to a lately cut stubble, where I dined as only a soldier of the twenty-first could. 'Twas soon finished. I doused my mess kit in the clear spring water since heated by the setting sun and even now as its last ray cast orangeish spots on the Medies tent, I came forth dressed in brightish O. D. a perfect master of myself, my hair burnt by the sun into the colour of tow, the pay day gleam in my eyes, and a longing for a cafe in my manly bosom.

As it were, the cream of night was fastly approaching. A silvery fog rose from the moor as I passed the Three Bridges and as I turned my set face to the village of Sorey-St. Martin, a new moon peeped over a pointed church spire most lazily. My hurried pace soon brought the village to my feet and as the domestic smell came to my seasoned nostrils a typical French bat brushed swiftly across my face and I sped up the narrow street with the spirit of adventure in my blood as the cafe hove in sight. Even then hardened warriors had beat me to it and were slinging the malted brew into waiting stomachs.

I grinned good fellowship as I entered and seated myself as to the advantage of service. A buzz of general talk went up from the throng amidst the regular cadence. After casting a hungry and thirsty eye at the oodling barmaid, I soon had beer and cognac a plenty and I then knew the night was started. My comrades were all warriors good but carried neither bill, sword nor dagger. They seemed by no means ill at ease and ordered frequently with timely wit. I soon waxed merry myself and cut sprightly with the rest, throwing bottles and glasses to my right and left, cracking skulls as though they were scented paper, the trench look in my eyes, the pink of vin rooze in my cheeks, my knuckles white with the excitement and my stomach distend, and most pregnant with seething beer. The spirits were in me. My franes flowing unceasingly into the calloused hands of the bar maid, the electric light seemingly a cluster of cleansed diamonds. With such vigorous pastime time was as nothing and as midnight waned I myself had spent like the beasts of the field. Forsooth my friends, darkness found me on a wandering course toward camp.

The new moon had a hungry look, the road had the lines of a snake, the Three Bridges were as ten, and the barracks danced like heat waves on the light railway track. The words of a dutious guard brought my wavering senses to almost numbness by words of, "Be think ye too, that ye have no longer to deal with the armee? Duke of

Light Railway, pass on now, but look ye to it that your neck does not abide beneath the yoke." A half hour found me unconscious neath the bean scented blankets and another pay night was since history. But, oh ye following morn. The green fields had no charm for me, the white and red poppies were unnoticed, the lark singing above the corn sang not for me, my mouth was as the feathers of a goslin, my head the mill of the forest and the babble of the French children mocked and flouted me. Assembly blown found me again a part of the twenty-first and I hastened by the old black oak to my rusty shovel. Passing my comrades I saw them not and knew them but as names.

## OUR INTRODUCTION TO BOX CAR RIDING IN FRANCE

*Gear, 3rd Bat. Hdqts.*

The first experience of every organization of the A. E. F. in riding the French box cars was probably very similar to ours. I'll recount the initial trip of the Headquarters Detachment of the 3rd Battalion via "Chevaux 8—Hommes 40". One night in September, we climbed into one of the familiar type of French cars at Le Havre for a journey to Le Mans. Only thirty-six were assigned to this particular car. How four men more could have found room is a problem that was unsolved. The night was dark and owing to the limited space all lights were put out. One can easily imagine the confusion. There was no straw, in fact, nothing at all except a lingering scent of the former occupants—horses. Each man had his pack, and a number of band men "fell in" with their instruments. The conversation that ensued for the first hour or two sounded as follows:

"Get off my feet, you big stiff. Where in hell do you think you're going? This is not a promenade." "Aw, shut up! How do you expect a guy to see here?" "Where're you, Johnson? I'm walking over someone to get to you." "Get that drum out of the way; no wonder there's no room." "Some bird is trying to push his feet through my face." "Can't you get over a little, Fetz, so I can have six inches of space to sit on?" "Don't see how I can, Bower, I'm jammed up tight against Murphy now." "Hey, for God's sake, get that pack off my head." "Damn the Kaiser!" "If you don't get that horn out of my face and keep it out, I'll decorate your skinny neck with it; and that drum too." "Well, where in the devil am I going to put them?" "Hang 'em up." "Where?" "Darnifino, any place to get them out of the way." "Who's that crawling around? Ashman, eh! No wonder there's no room with that fat stiff in here. He ought to have a car for himself!"—and more on the same line.

But at last everyone found a place where he could either sit or stand without comfort, and after the train started on its way, a few dozed off, and quiet reigned. When daylight came we managed to crawl out of our position with aches and pains, by stepping on some of the others, but as we became accustomed to the limited space, the danger of bloodshed decreased, and when Le Mans was reached a happy family atmosphere prevailed.





REGT. HDQ.



1<sup>ST</sup> BAT. HDQ.



BATTALION  
COMMANDERS



BRIDGES AT  
SORCY.



VIEW  
SORCY CANAL



HDQ. 2<sup>ND</sup> BAT.



SORCY VIEW  
HDQ. CAMP.



# Headquarters Company, 1st and 2nd Battalions

April 1, 1919.

Headquarters Detachment, a personnel of so-called non-producers, possess capabilities of a widely extended character. The filed service records have no distinct bearing on the individual accomplishments and professional abilities of these men, aside from wielding a pen and pencil and manipulating a typewriter. Constant and intimate association with the members of this detachment will unfailingly impress upon one their rare tact and talent. Among countless other vocations and otherwise we claim to have enrolled, vaudeville stars, mountain guides, cartoonists, typesetters, carnival barkers, jewelers, jail wardens, ribbon salesmen, minstrel comedians, piano tuners, musicians and cattle fanciers. This khaki clad assemblage after diplomatic sorting and assignment, constitutes our Headquarters Company, which invariably produced the required result. The Regimental Office force was composed mostly of members from our company and we offered for their selection, draftsmen, electricians, telephone operators, mechanical and construction engineers, telegraphers, and, last but not least, the ever-ready orderlies. During the time in which our other companies were dilligently whipping themselves into vigorous physical condition by way of drilling, calisthentics and adhering soldierly to the strict rules of discipline, we were busily engaged by night and day, arranging the office work prior to our departure for Sunny France. Consequently, considerable difficulty and embarrassment was experienced by our awkward squads when ordered to roll packs and swing into military formation. However, we made favorable progress after undergoing a brief period of training and immediately before bidding au revoir to Miss Liberty, we, as an entire regiment presented a presentable military appearance.

On that memorable twenty-sixth day of December, 1917, we boarded the good ship President Grant and a few hours thereafter we sailed out of the New York Harbor into the vast Atlantic Ocean which was then causing our Uncle Samuel much concern and uneasiness. Crossing this wide expanse of submarine infested water, furnished a fourteen day period of unceasing amusement as well as an over-abundance of thrill and excitement. Corralled in all available sections of this ship we were as comfortable as a pair of wet feet. Considerable trouble was experienced in the mess room where the continuous rocking of the boat had a tendency to either hash our meals or transfer them to the floor. Our acquired discipline afforded little assistance in persuading our daily eats to follow their natural course stomachward, even after the act of mastication was thoroughly complied with. As faithfully as we tried to Hooverize on foodstuffs, many of us did the jack-knife over the railing, and in a spirit of unwearied generosity issued our daily rations to the fishes. By so doing we received six meals per diem, three up and three down.

The restrictions enroute, imposed for our personal safety, at times proved to be very severe. They limited our time on smoking, promenading, and many other diver-

sions while the use of flashlights was absolutely forbidden. We were also obliged to string a death preventor around our manly chest and neck although it proved very cumbersome and uncomfortable and emitted an odor far removed from geraniums. According to instructions, upon the sounding of the signal, we would, in orderly haste proceed to our assigned post, and should extreme danger necessitate us to abandon ship the previous mentioned life preservers with their body sustaining properties would increase our possibilities of rescue. This signal was responded to on frequent occasions, only to discover a floating raft or a large school of sea monsters. Although we came in contact with violent storms and this danger augmented by the deep sea mysteries, we never were placed in imminent peril of surrendering our cargo as a repast for the hungry sharks. Accompanying us we had the 30th Engineers with their gas and flame, also hard boiled officers and guards. While they were on guard duty it was purely a game of, Chase the Squirrel. The game opened thusly: The first guard would pop the question, "are you one of the 21st roughnecks?" A reply in the affirmative would start our troubles abrewing. "You can't stand there." Assured of that we would start over the hatch and be halted by another sentinel and with a similar phrase, "you can't stand there." Going from hatch to main deck our progress was interrupted by the authoritative shouts from another guard, "you can't go there." Changing our intended course only to be caught between the hatch and the cabin by an unseen guard who bellows, "What are you doing there?" This leaves but one resort, the hurricane deck. Seeking this as a refuge we are halted by an oversized guard who in rasping tones compels us to repair to our bunks by his repeated commands, "you can't go there." The entire outlay of over-obedient guards were masters of one sentence, "you can't stand there." We cannot truthfully testify as to the quality of their flames, but the gas they peddled carried dreadful qualities. Here the major in command of the 30th Engineers, through the humorous impulses of our officers fell a victim to the very popular sport, the Badger Fight. How was the gallant and unsuspecting major to know that there was no genuine badger under that box when he had the word of our trustworthy Captain Mansfield that the game was on the square. However, as the smoke is clearing away and the sun of peace is gloriously shining over devastated France, it is with exceeding pleasure that we call attention to the meritorious activities and praiseworthy accomplishments of the 30th Engineers at the front, who are known as America's first gas and flame regiment. We had with us also, a stevedore regiment of smoked Irishmen, or to be more explicit, Gentlemen of Color. They furnished us with amusement and often times separated the boys from their money by indulging in that great cube throwing sport, craps. Their maneuvers, impelled by submarine fear was extremely ludicrous. The first real sub scare occurred while the boys were occupied with their noon meal. The band was playing and we, in jovial spirits, were feeding our sea-air appetites

when, BLUEY, went the signal whistle and the entire ship resounded with the ringing bells. Band concert was over, and for the majority, so was dinner. After our gunners took a few pot shots at an object which resembled a submarine, things resumed their normal state. Our daily programme en route left an indelible impression on the minds of all and taught us the possibility of sleeping, bathing, holding informal receptions and doing light housekeeping on an upper berth. A canned sardine had dancing space compared with our congested condition.

The most pleasing sight of our entire journey, presented itself about 8:00 A. M. A dark line appeared in the hazy distance seeming to link with a vast dome-shaped object, and we concluded that this must be land. Our cherished hopes had been realized and from now on the world looked brighter. The bright welcoming sun shone on the hills of Western France and the city of Brest. We marched ashore on the thirteenth of January, 1918. Parading through the streets of this seaport town, with the regimental band at our head amid greeting cheers from the citizens, we felt as though our most perilous engagement in the world strife was ended. This, indeed, was the old world which was new to us. After fourteen days of misery at sea, it seemed as if we had dropped on a new planet. Seeing people of strange customs, hearing an unfamiliar language and reading unfamiliar signs, and imbibing unaccustomed refreshments proved to be a novelty to all of us. We departed from Brest on the same day for parts unknown as at this time all of our questions in regard to our destination was answered by, "somewhere in France," which was hopelessly indefinite. Signs of information, being strangely different caused much inconvenience in attempting to determine our course and future location. Our curiosity was satisfied when we steamed into Nevers, a large supply depot and typical French city. We lingered here for but a short time. Being granted permission to visit the city relieved the monotony of army routine and at this camp we battled with the new language and adopted many of the French manners and customs. Rubber boots were the most popular and necessary articles of clothing as Old Sol sure showered us with rain which resulted in mud. Upon completing several barrack buildings and clothing the boys sufficiently to withstand the inclement weather we bid farewell to dear old Nevers and headed for another camp, then unknown to us. The quaint old village of Sorey proved to be our next stopping place, where we established a camp and remained for eight long months. With no change of weather, we landed in a hole of rain-water and mud, also an abundance of vin of various tastes and colors. We proceeded to establish the Headquarters Company for the Light Railway System of the Toul Sector, or better known to us as the St. Mihiel Front. Now we began to realize that we were at war. Here, we were issued gas masks and tin derbies, and the gas muzzles as a nuisance took the place of the life preserver. Entertainments were tendered us in a stately manner, Fritz from above with us down below. For our initial two months at this camp the weather was so detestable that it seemed that we were all discouraged from the Colonel on down. At this time Master Engineer Miller presented us with the company mascot in the form of a semi-domesticated coon. Without a dissenting vote we dubbed him PETE and he afforded us much amusement with his versatile capers. He was always in mischief and had a keen appetite for rubber boots, campaign hats, wool sox and shaving brushes. Many characters of note were included in

our personnel, who about this time commenced coming prominently to the limelight.

Our Top Sergeant Wallace, serious minded and conscientious, was a father to us all. His aspiration in life was to cause happiness and instill contentment in the hearts of his comrades. By his methods he, without question, succeeded. His lectures and chastisements were accepted by every member, not in a spirit of levity, but in the manner for which they were intended. We never failed to appreciate the paternal interest that the top kicker took in his fold. Posed majestically on his soap box rostrum he rectified us in flowery and impressive remarks. He often reminded us that he was no advocate of prohibition but that he feared for our too intimate acquaintance with the newly presented French Wet Goods. A majority of the boys have a military sobriquet attached to their person and Sergeant Wallace was no exception. To the boys with whom he was most intimately acquainted he was known as, "Two Times the Long Way Wallace." We are delighted to tell of his promotion to a lieutenantcy and now that common nickname is superseded by a snappy salute from all. I wish to make mention of another prominent character, who is no other than the ex-vaudeville comedian, Alibi Harry Middleton. Sergeant Murphy succeeded Wallace as Top Cutter and was commonly known as Outside Murphy. Much to our regret, he reigned for a brief period only, entering the officers training school and later was awarded the Sam Brown Belt. In the role of Infantry Lieutenant he was wounded after four weeks activity on the front and removed to a base hospital. During our stay at Sorey, the regimental band was reorganized and through their efforts the boys maintained a cheerful disposition and whiled away many leisure moments attending the semi-weekly band concerts. In addition to producing melody our musicians also served as ideal kitchen policemen and obliging orderlies. The headquarters boys exercised extreme pains in learning to salute our Sam Brown Belters in the West Point Method as introduced by our Colonel E. D. Peek but we experienced considerable difficulty in perfecting our salute as suggested by Lt. Col. H. J. Slifer. This was more or less of an Engineer's highball but executed with the free arm only. Our popular comrade Caukins, introduced the wearing of pink pajamas as essential to sanitation. In a good natured spirit, he enjoyed the constant joshing to which this subjected him rather than becoming indignant. We decided that pajamas were superfluous baggage and insofar as boudoir apparel was concerned we decided to remain out of style and took to bed in our usual manner, although our steel splintered underclothes took on an O. D. hue from nightly contact with our seldomly cleaned blankets. Our O. D. blankets served many purposes, viz. bed springs, pillows, mattresses, covers and bed sheets. An up-to-date bathhouse, constructed and made complete in every detail by our Stonewall MaGinn, made it possible to keep our exteriors in a fairly sanitary condition, while the Chaplain, or sky pilot, did his utmost to cleanse us morally by his Sabbath morning eloquence on various texts. We were compelled to register our names after taking the weekly bath so that willing or otherwise our soap and towel were put into action at least four times per month. I hesitate through fear to vouch for the successful results of our Dear Chaplain's efforts. Our Mess Sergeant was always distinguished by his beef steak appetite and his unfailing ability to fill in his belt space. The supply sergeant was known by his immaculate attire and



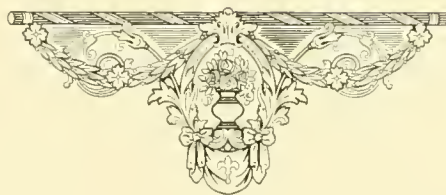
reserve supply of government issued clothing. Sergeants Steyert and MacLaren are accused of changing uniforms weekly and the troublesome laundry question was nothing in their young lives. The mess sergeant who regulates our stomach capacity is even less popular than the gallant bugler. Even against the most vigorous protests, the bugler substitutes as an animated alarm clock, and is undoubtedly the cock of the walk. He is the most prominent disturber of peace and pleasure. When he toots his horn, we rise and shine, dress in reckless haste, and when he so decides we partake of our cup of java and whatever food solids the grease burning cooks deem advisable to impose upon our empty stomachs. He is also the factory whistle insofar as our days of toil are concerned. His music releases us from the daily bondage and the same discordant strains rushes us to a serpentine line all set to indulge in our evening chow. He also chases us to our quarters by night and regulates our bed time, whether we feel so inclined or not. Not only did we become personally acquainted with many citizens of surrounding villages but after countless sessions of a sociable nature, extracting corks and making many bottles feel lonesomely empty, our repeated shouts for replacements perfected us in the use of at least one word of our much limited French Vocabulary, *Encore*. Shooting corks at Sorey were reminiscent of machine gun fire at Mont Sec, and our nightly attacks on Vin Blanc in the Vin Rouge Sector were executed with staggering blows in which many fell but few were wounded. When we received orders to prepare for our removal to Dombasle, a farewell visit was paid to our good French friends. Here with a sentimental sob and a kiss of bon jour we donned our earthly possessions in the form of a pack and departed. Most of the boys were ordered to Vraincourt where Fritz made it uncomfortably warm for us during the closing days of hostilities. No matter

whether in storm or calm we managed to pay the boys regularly and distribute the much yearned for mail from home. Here ruin and desolation detracted considerably from our armistice celebration and we all rejoiced inwardly the coming of peace. Now as before, the intermittent rainfall prevented this section from being bone dry and weather conditions were enough to disgust the most patient.

Again it became necessary to be herded and corralled into our sidedoor Pullmans when we moved forward to Conflans, a railroad center of much importance. Here our post bellum activities brought us much credit and we were profusely complimented on our good work. It is well to note that at this juncture of our career the well clothed supply sergeants met with first opposition in the way of highly polished uniforms. Competition existed but for a brief time and died an untimely death. Candy, cigarettes and various other commodities were distributed promiscuously and without questions. While stationed at Conflans we fully realized the truth contained in the old adage, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." Non-Coms were obliterated overnight while others were made and remade in rapid fire order. Having been relieved of all duties while at Conflans we moved to Labry where we had access to a large and spacious drill ground. The finishing polish of military training was applied, and still we plugged away on the regimental office work and various other duties necessary to place us in a position to accept sailing orders for our return to God's land, the Grand Old U. S. A. We stand all set and hoping for the best while our battle cry is no longer, "When do we eat," but, "We want to go home."

H. E. STEYERT,

Sergt. Hdq. Det., April 1, 1919.





Co. A AT WORK



POLICING UP



CO "A", CAMP KIVRAY



OFFICERS Co. A.



Co. A. 1<sup>ST</sup> PLAT.



Co. A. 2<sup>ND</sup> PLAT.



PARTIALLY COMPLETED SHOPS



Co. A. 3<sup>RD</sup> PLAT.



Co. A. - 4<sup>TH</sup> PLAT.



## History of Company A

Camp Duequesne—was the scene of our first railroad construction in France. The day following our arrival in January, 1918, we started construction of a standard gauge railhead from the Duequesne yard through a thick forest in the direction of the proposed aviation fields near Romorantin. Several weeks later the 11th Engineers arrived from the British front and took up quarters in a warehouse next door. We were much impressed by the stories these veterans told us. When we left for the Advance on February 15th some of us thought that we had our last good night's sleep in France, since we knew, from the experience of the 11th that the German aviators would bomb us night and day. Incidentally we had acquired quite a number of German souvenirs from them, part of which were afterwards, to our discomfort, discovered to be English and French. Our first camp at the front was at Gerard Sas which was one of the camps used by the troops in support. The 16th Machine Gun Battalion was camped there when we arrived. They also had souvenirs for sale, but we were then wiser and poorer. Here we had a taste, or rather a liberal dose, of the discomforts of life. The country was a sea of mud, and the highways almost impassable. Even the barracks were ankle deep in mud and alive with cooties. Here too was demonstrated the possibilities of food conservation by the two messes a day system. Stew was the favorite "mess" at this time. The first few nights we didn't get much sleep on account of the heavy firing and numerous gas alarms. Before long we began to consider ourselves old timers and when a Company of the 23rd moved into our camp from the S. O. S. we took diabolical delight in discoursing on the horrors of the "front." Still it looked very serious to us one night shortly afterwards. Capt. McGregor had received notice that a strong German attack was expected. Just after dark an alarm was spread and we received orders to stand by with fixed bayonets. The attack never materialized, but we received little sleep that night. During this time we were working on light railway extension in the Nauginsard wood and on the yard at Leonval. Our camp was six miles from the latter point and we walked to work there every day through heavy mud. There was a good deal of excitement during this time by reason of the frequent barrages, aeroplane battles and rumors of spies.

One day just as the men lined up for mess the bugle sounded a call that many of us had never heard, and investigation disclosed the officers' quarters in flames. It had just become dark and the flames and smoke shot high into the air, doubtless being visible all over the country. We were commanded to scatter, as it was feared the conflagration would draw gun fire from the Germans.

Lieutenant O'Brien was in the building at the time and, in escaping, was badly burned.

On March 25th we moved from Gerard Sas to the new camp at La Reine.

The great Champagne drive occurred on Easter Sunday, which was afterwards known throughout the sector as the "Battle of Boucq."

On April 5th the Germans, no doubt having learned that the 26th, then a new division, had just taken over the lines, heavily shelled the sector with H.E. and gas. A detachment of Company A men, working on the grade near Raulecourt, was caught in shell fire directed at a battery that was located nearby. Owing to the fact, no doubt, that one of the members of the party was carrying a horseshoe, no one was injured, although all were covered with mud from head to foot. During the spring and on into summer we continued to send out detachments on new construction near Noviant Vignet, Dongermain, Bacarat and other points, each with varying experiences. On September first the company assembled to prepare for the big drives. The first platoon was sent to the Manonville engineer dump, the two other platoons remaining in camp to await the commencement of the attack. Work started on both the Bois Chanot and Flirey extension at daylight the morning of the drive, and they were connected up with German steel three days later. A great deal of work had to be done on the German line to put it in condition to handle our power and equipment. On October 8th the first platoon finished up the job and turned the track over to the 22nd Engineers and left the following day for Sorey, proceeding from there to Malancourt in the Argonne. When approaching their destination they were stopped by military police and learned that the town was full of gas, so the balance of the trip was made with gas masks at the alert. The second and third platoons, moving out of the Bois Chanot during the St. Mihiel drive, established a new camp at Xivray, formerly in the American front line, retaining headquarters there until October 7th, when the move to the Argonne was made. This move was made by truck, and on account of the drivers not being acquainted with the country they became lost and did not regain their bearings until arriving at the town of Cheppy. Malancourt was reached the night of October 8th, where they were rejoined by the first platoon. For the next few days the company worked together, putting the track into condition to handle traffic to the end of the track. On the 17th the first platoon moved to Mont-Faucon, which had been taken a few days previous and which was yet very close to the front line. After working there some days they proceeded to Cierges with the balance of the company. It had originally been planned to move to Romagne, about six kilometers beyond Cierges, but at the time of starting it was found that the Germans still held the town. At 9:00 P. M. on October 31st a barrage started east of us on the Meuse River, and a number of shells dropped on the hillside on which we were dug in. At about three o'clock the following morning a barrage started directly ahead of us. At four o'clock we arose, rolled a light pack and, after eating a hot breakfast in the dark, we started for Romagne. As we were entering this town the line of advance was just going over the hill at a little town called Bauthieville, about two kilometers ahead. The buildings in Romagne seemed to be hopping around like corn in a hopper, the

walls falling in on all sides of us and clouds of dust arising everywhere. Many ambulances were rushing to the rear full of killed or wounded; many prisoners passed us on the road carrying their dead and wounded. The artillery fire was intense. The third platoon proceeded along the line to the left of Romagne towards St. Georges. Dead men and horses covered the ground on all sides. A detachment of the 16th Engineers were brought up to give us assistance. They had no sooner relieved us at that place when a large shell exploded among them, killing four privates and the lieutenant in command. The first and second platoons continued to move forward on the road leading to Montigny and Dun sur Meuse. The artillery fire was the heaviest we had experienced. Every man escaped death by a hair's-breadth a hundred times this day, but providence still protected us. The infantry were advancing very fast and we found it impossible to keep up with them. During the following week we succeeded

in getting the road into condition for operation to within a short distance of Montigny. The armistice came on the 11th, but still our work continued, and with the 56th Pioneer Infantry we completed the road to Montigny, that part of the road leading to Dun being abandoned. From that time on our work consisted of maintaining the line and keeping it in condition for the operating department, who were then hauling ammunition in large quantities. On November 25th the company packed up and departed from Romagne for Audun le Romain to work on the standard gauge. Here the various platoons separated, the first going to Pierpont, the third to Briey, the second remaining at Audun. After our work on the Soixante we found the standard gauge very uneventful and monotonous.

In February, 1919, we were relieved by the 3rd and 4th Battalions and thus brought to a conclusion our railroad work in France.





## History of Company B 21st Engineers (Construction) Light Railway

In organizing at Camp Grant, September, 1917, the regimental officers, realizing that the success of the whole enterprise rested upon the ability of the construction companies, the best of the surplus man-power was assigned to Companies A and B.

The company rapidly forged ahead and under capable guidance bade fair to develop into an outfit of more than average military ability. The regiment left Camp Grant December 16th, arriving at Camp Merritt, N. J., December 19th.

Sailing out of Hoboken December 26th we made an uneventful crossing and arrived at Brest, France, January 10, 1918.

Debarking January 13th, we were immediately transported to Camp Duquesne, Gievres, where we, as a company, undertook some of the construction of the vast yard planned for that center of activity. From January 14th until February 26th the construction of a standard gauge railway occupied our entire stay at this camp.

February 28th, 1918, found B company detraining at Sorey Gare, ready to start upon the first work under its own regimental orders. Having completed its unloading at the station, orders were received to proceed to Cornieville, where "billeting" accommodations were awaiting us. They proved to be French billets, whose ground floor occupants were chickens, cows, horses and pigs and whose owners lived upon the same floor, in the same building. The whole journey having been made under miserable weather conditions, that still continued up to our arrival into the town, anything looked inviting to us. Our billets having been assigned the company, with its usual briskness, started rapidly to make itself comfortable. The company, for one entire week, while waiting orders to start upon our construction work, was kept busy cleaning up the town.

Tuesday morning, March 5th, orders were given us to proceed with the construction of eight kilometers of narrow gauge track between Cornieville and Sorey, connecting the network of light railways in the area back of the trenches to the standard gauge railhead at Sorey and also a spur to the canal at Vertuzey. All of the obstacles usually met with in such work, clearing, filling, cutting and ditching in all degrees were overcome, and being undertaken systematically the work progressed rapidly. At this time a spur was also undertaken and completed from Camp B, where the first platoon was in camp, to Mobile Hospital 39.

Having to make the connection of all the tracks at Sorey three platoons were ordered to move there on Monday, June 17th.

Cornieville was heavily bombarded on Sunday, June 16th, and that portion of the company that was ordered to move the following day left this day instead.

The road and yard was turned over to the Transportation Department on Saturday, June 22nd. This work had been done under very unpleasant circumstances, for rain was an almost daily factor throughout the entire undertaking.

Having completed our first piece of work to the complete satisfaction of those in command, we, after a brief period of maintaining the road that we had built were ordered to undertake the construction of a short stretch of track between Broussey and Raulecourt. Undertaken well within the enemy's vision and range of fire, the work, in connection with Company A of the 21st, was done entirely at night and was completed within the space of a week. The alarm for the presence of enemy gas was sounded three times during the work upon three separate nights.

From July 5th until August 10th what remained of the company, for details were scattered broadcast over the network of light railways for maintenance, was engaged in changing the road from Cornieville to Sorey from French to American twenty-five pound steel, which was more able to withstand the traffic than the Decauville or French rail.

Scattered from Cornieville all along the French light railway system to well within the neighborhood of Toul the details, sent out to maintain, acquitted themselves very satisfactorily. Particularly are they to be mentioned when it is taken into consideration that it was necessary to reside and work in a territory long dominated by the German artillery, and where the enemy was doubtless aware of the preparations being made for an offensive.

Those elements of the command left at Sorey were ordered on August 10th to Euville to begin the construction of a cut-off, where a spirited competition between the third and fourth platoons resulted in great progress in the construction. The command after two weeks was ordered returned to Sorey, where the entire company was again brought together from all points.

Under orders calling for great speed a cut-off was started and rapidly completed, linking the road from Sorey to a spur entering Pagny. The right of way was quickly constructed and the laying of the rails was upon a fair way to completion when orders were received removing the outfit from Sorey to Jouy, to build a loop from one side of the town to the other around the place, as it had been found that American steam locomotives had not enough clearance between the rails and the buildings, and, too, it was thought that the blocking of the road would be prevented in case of enemy bombardment. This work, undertaken entirely at night and amid almost continuous rain, was completed within ten days.

Amid a downpour of rain the company was ordered to break camp upon the afternoon of September 11th; entraining in pitch darkness, the order to proceed was given as the first guns were booming in the commencement of the St. Mihiel drive. Wet to the skin, we thoroughly appreciated the ride around the arc under the muzzles of guns from Jouy to Flirey, where we arrived the morning of the drive and immediately started construction of several kilometers of roadbed, forming a junction between our own and the captured narrow gauge.

The linking up of the two systems—of the American from a point near Flirey and the German at a point about





Co. B. 1<sup>ST</sup> PLAT.



Co. B 2<sup>ND</sup> PLAT



Co B 3<sup>RD</sup> PLAT



Co B 4<sup>TH</sup> PLAT.



OFFICERS  
Co B



Co B. Hdq.



Co. B KITCHEN.



four kilometers north—called for rapid work, as the advance of the combatant troops had been so speedy as to make the delivery of supplies a source of anxiety, particularly drinking water, rations and ammunition.

The work progressed satisfactorily day and night, subjected to minor bombardment by day and visited by hordes of enemy planes at night, working over a ground that after four years of shelling was pitted in innumerable trenches. Cutting and removing barb wire and building bulwarks to keep the track up, it was completed in as short a time as could be expected.

Having left a party for the road's maintenance at Flirey, the camp was changed to Essey, where the order was received to put the track from that point to Montsec in operation and to build a spur from the main line into the town for the Quartermaster's Department.

Again subjected to bombardment both by day and night the work was undertaken and carried to a successful finish.

Having been in this town for four years a large munition dump had been established here, and not having succeeded in its destruction before they were forced to hurriedly depart, the enemy vainly tried his best in accomplishing its destruction by bombardment from a long distance. During his daylight attempts the men were called upon to do what was required in putting the road, which ran through the center of the dump, in safe working order. Several times, with shells falling in close proximity, detachments replaced derailed steamers. Frequently under observation from the enemy's balloons detachments at work were considered of such importance as to draw the Germans' shell fire. Working from this point the former German narrow gauge was put into successful operation over its various branches, from Flirey to Thiécourt, including a "switchback" from Riley's Junction, where the connection was made with the captured enemy road to the line out of Essey to Montsec. At this point two of our surveyors, Privates J. P. Smith and Oilphant, were captured tracing German narrow-gauge lines.

Friday, October 11th the company left Essey on a narrow-gauge train for Sorey and the following morning, Saturday, October 12th, left on trucks for Cheppy and, arriving there, we proceeded to construct, repair and maintain narrow-gauge trackage, captured from the Germans, toward Montfaucon, Charpentry and Aubreville.

Our camp here was pitched in close proximity to the cross roads that were a target for German bombing planes and also at the base of a steep hill which afforded shelter from shell fire.

The men went about their assignment with their usual good spirit and with the idea of doing their regular good work and effecting its rapid completion. Detachments were sent in the direction of Montfaucon to construct trackage and Charpentry to repair and install a track in a munition dump. These parties successfully completed their work, while the remainder of the company repaired

the road in the direction of Aubreville, built a spur into the munition dump between Cheppy and Varennes and put the main line between the latter two points into operation. Considering the line between Aubreville and Cheppy as almost impossible, a survey had been made to overcome the difficulty. For this work a detachment was supplied from our company to supervise the work of a pioneer infantry company intrusted with its construction and attached to our command. Less than three weeks had been needed in the completion of all that had been assigned to us in this region.

Two A. M. of November 1st saw us embarked upon our work in the last phase of the Argonne offensive. Leaving Cheppy we passed over the line that we had repaired up to Charpentry, from which point we successively passed Apremont, Chatel-Cheherry, Cornay, Fleville and Marcq St. Jurian, all of which territory was being heavily bombarded by the retiring enemy. Debarking at Marcq, we met with a sad misfortune. The yard at Marcq, under observation by the Germans, was being bombarded on our arrival and Corporal Walworth was disabled by flying shrapnel, and a direct hit made upon our engine caused injuries to the engineer (Richie) and fireman (Griffin) which later resulted in Richie's death.

Urgent orders for the prompt repair of the line from this place as far as it was possible to carry it, resulted in the dispatch of small detachments with instructions to repair the road as fast as they blew it out.

Working under a constant rain of shells, which frequently caused the working parties to take to cover momentarily to escape bursting shells, the road was repaired up and into Grand Pre, which had taken the detachments beyond the American machine gun line, where they were driven from the track by the German machine guns.

One working party was compelled to dive into a ditch as a German shell made a direct hit on their gun stack, and completed the repair with nobody injured.

Steady fighting of the various units could be seen throughout the entire day. Having completed our work, and after a night of terrific bombardment, the order was given the following noon to return to the Cheppy branch for the same kind of work.

Three days later, on November 6th, this company moved again to Marcq to maintain track between Cheppy and Briquenay. While at this place we received the news that the armistice had been signed.

On Monday, November 25th, the command left Marcq by light railway and proceeded to Varennes and from this point two days later by trucks through Verdun to Longuyon, arriving there November 27th, where we were used as a transportation unit to maintain standard gauge track between Longuyon and Gondrecourt.

On December 12th the company moved its headquarters to Spincourt and from there sent out detachments to various towns between Longuyon and Fignellmont until the road was taken over by the French on February 15, 1919.

## History of Company C

Company C was organized on September 19, 1917, when a number of recruits were assigned to Barracks 308 under the temporary command of Lieutenant Smith. A few days later Captain Bunker, afterwards transferred to 311th Engineers, was assigned to that position and was relieved however a few days later by Captain Evans. On October 2nd the company moved to Barracks 315, and it was there that Captain Sheedy, our present commander, took charge. At that time the weather was so inclement that the company did little drilling and, instead, a great deal of the day was taken up with lectures on the duties and responsibilities of the soldier. Company C was at that time strictly a mechanical unit and those men whose abilities did not come up to the mechanical requirements were transferred to other companies, including a number who went to the 35th Engineers, a shop regiment being organized at the same time.

The company was by that time well organized and camp life settled down to the regular routine of drills, hikes, lectures, etc. Saturdays and Sundays were largely devoted to recreation and sports. A football team was organized by "Duke" Reynolds, which was a great source of enjoyment. It was about this time that the "Wild Flower" Club was in full bloom—

I'm a little desert flower  
Growing wilder every hour;  
I'm as wild as I can be,  
No one ever pities me.

On December 11th preparations for immediate departure overseas were commenced and at 2:30 P. M., December 16th, the company boarded train for some unknown destination. That proved to be Camp Merritt, N. J., which was reached about 10:00 A. M., December 19th. It was here that Duke Reynolds, the football leader, had the misfortune to suffer an accident which confined him to the hospital. In stepping from the train at Dumont and endeavoring to cross a track he did not notice an approaching train which struck him, causing severe injuries. He never again joined the company but it is understood that he fully recovered from his injuries.

Christmas dinner was the last real meal enjoyed on American soil, having boarded ship the following morning for overseas. Arriving at Brest on January 10th, 1918, the company disembarked at 8:00 A. M. the 13th and boarded a train for "Somewhere in France." Our first sight of German prisoners was at Tours. They were, of course, objects of great curiosity to us. At Gievres we had our first experience with floorless and heatless barracks. Many members of the company also received their first intimate acquaintance with pick and shovels here, all on a ration of corned beef and hard tack.

About the middle of February the organization of the company was transformed from an all mechanical to seventy-five per cent. operating unit. Twenty-five per cent. of our mechanical personnel were retained, the balance being transferred to D, E and F companies, receiving in exchange a like percentage of operating men. This qualified each company as a complete railway unit in itself with its

proper quota of maintenance, transportation and mechanical men. Late in March steel helmets and gas masks were issued and we received our first gas mask drill. We left Gievres for the front on March 30th, leaving behind us many broken hearts among the mademoiselles of the village. Sorey sur Meuse proved to be our destination which was reached the afternoon of April 1st. Here we received an introduction to the petite chemin de fer, which we were to know so well and which had already been started by Company D. Quite an extensive cut had to be driven through hard rock to connect up the line and a part of Company C was assigned to do this work. Other detachments were engaged in grading and laying steel. This work was finished late in April. The machine shop was also equipped and afterwards operated by the mechanics of this company. We were also engaged in the work of assembling American-made narrow gauge cars, our daily average being about eight cars. During this time we managed to find time to organize a baseball team but not until June 4th did we manage to carry off the honors when we defeated Company B after an exciting game.

The month of August was very busy. During the latter part of the month many transportation men were taken from the company for train service. After the commencement of the St. Mihiel drive the mechanical men were kept busy overhauling captured German equipment which was promptly put into service. One of the German gas tractors was installed in the shop to perform stationary service.

It was on the night of September 16th that Sergeant Reilly lost his life. He and Sergeant Shaughnessy were returning from a nearby village when an airplane was heard approaching. At the time it was thought to be an allied plane, but as it drew nearer the pilot shut off the motor, volplaning down low over camp, and dropped a bomb, stunning Sergeant Shaughnessy and killing Sergeant Reilly outright. The departed comrade, who was well liked, was laid to rest the following day in the Military Cemetery at Vertuzey, Meuse.

On the evening of October 4th, men of Company C captured a German observation balloon. It had broken loose from its moorings behind the German lines and came floating over the hill above Sorey barely skimming the tree tops. It was soon observed that a long cable was dragging on the ground and the men quickly grabbed the rope hauling the balloon to the ground. The French immediately appeared on the scene and proceeded to take charge of our trophy, but Captain Sheedy politely informed them that he was perfectly capable of handling the prisoner. October 5th was another sad day for the company. Private Edward F. Rank was killed in a collision near Buxieres, his train owing to darkness collided with a string of cars on the main line. The following day his remains were buried beside Sergeant Reilly at Vertuzey.

On October 8th we were informed that we were to move to the Verdun sector and we started loading our heavy mechanical equipment, material and tools on to standard gauge cars and the next day detachments left for Dom-





Co. C.  
1ST PLAT.



Co. C.  
2ND PLAT.



Co. C.  
3RD PLAT.



Co. C.  
4TH PLAT.



Co. C.  
AT LA FERTE  
BERNARD.



AT MESS

basle en Argonne. The first detachment on the ground immediately began making preparations for the entire company. Squad tents were put up and in a short time a tent village dotted the side of a nearby hill. Daily detachments left Sorey by trucks and on October 14th the last detachment left the village which had been our home for some months. Dombasle was another important railroad. There were several routes out of this village and all were rendering valuable service. Now that we had become located, the company was assigned to various details. The shops formerly operated entirely by the French were now taken over by our mechanics. Traffic was increasing daily upon the light railway and Captain Sheedy was meeting the issue by furnishing men from his ranks as all of the other companies were taxed to the uttermost for manpower. Shortly after this we moved to barracks less than a mile away on high land on the

opposite side of the valley. The move was affected with but little delay to the work, which was of first consideration, for the Americans were now in the midst of a most deadly task. The roar of heavy artillery never ceased. Life was now growing exciting and everyone was doing his bit. Rest with the transportation man was getting to be at a premium. To come in after thirty or forty hours of service and to be called out again within a few hours was a common occurrence. Likewise, the mechanical department, which was caring for the needs of the 'petite' locomotives, were kept busy, and the skilled men who manned the various machines and performed the many services that require knowledge and experience, were working day and night at the duties that were now so important. Master Engineer Link acted in the role of Master Mechanic, assisted by Sergeants Shaughnessy, Wiley and David as shop foremen, and their efforts together with

those of the rank and file kept the motive power in such condition that the wheels of transportation never faltered mechanically in the most trying hours. November 1st the Americans started another big drive in the Argonne. At about 4:30 A. M. a barrage was begun that fairly shook the earth. The steady roar of the heavy field artillery was interspersed with the belch of naval giants which were being moved about on the standard gauge and were dropping their enormous missiles of destruction upon important railway junctions far behind the German lines. Every man was into the game now from the Captain down to the private. Every transportation man available was called into service. Even Bugler Creekmore had to go out and leave the company without reveille or taps. A whistle served for reveille and no one overslept. Everyone had to place his shoulder to the wheel as we were operating a railway that was rendering a most valuable service in the most perilous hours the Americans had yet experienced.

Special mention can not be made of all; all have undergone a vast amount of experience and peril and every one is entitled to share in the accomplishment.

On many occasions our trainmen hauling ammunition for the artillery had been bombed and undergone machine gun fire from the Boche planes attracted by the sparks from the stacks and the flare of light from fireboxes as the firemen toiled with their scoops.

Probably none however had a closer call than Engineer A. B. Brower and fireman Daniel Kearney when a Boche airplane dropped an aerial bomb, six feet long and thirteen inches in diameter right through the tank of the 787, a French standard gauge engine at Vardennos on the night of November 2nd. Fortunately the bomb did not explode, which undoubtedly saved their lives.

Probably none of us realized how great had been the strain until after the signing of the armistice and the giant guns hushed; silenced, we hope, forever. The next few days after the armistice were devoted to moving ammunition for the advancing army of occupation, and cleaning up the line. The details which had been detached soon began to arrive at Dombasle and soon the company

was all assembled again. Now that the exciting days of warfare were over, we were able to visit many of the ruins at the old front, one of the most interesting sights being at Montfaucon, where in 1916, from the steps of the now ruined church, the Kaiser had addressed his troops encouraging them to the supreme effort.

On November 25th we started moving to Longuyon traveling by truck through Verdun, Etain and the most devastated portion of Eastern France. At Longuyon we took charge of the shops, light plant and the round-house, as well as furnishing a number of men for train and engine service.

On December 4th we lost our first man in standard gauge service. Private Holcomb in endeavoring to get off at the forward end of a moving United States engine, fell off, and the entire engine passed over him, killing him instantly.

About December 12th, the company started to move to Audun le Romain. En route to this place we were unfortunate enough to lose another member of the company. Grover Case slipped and fell from one of the cars while the train was in motion and received injuries from which he died in a short time. A sergeant, in charge of a firing squad, escorted the remains to the military cemetery at Vertuzey and laid them to rest with the usual military honors beside Sergeant Reilly and Private Rank.

On Christmas we were served with a very good dinner and given a few presents in the way of dainties and smoking material. Such remembrances were appreciated by a soldier in a foreign land and were joyously received. The next event was New Year's eve, when stealthily a barrel of vin rouge rolled itself into our quarters. It was captured and when 1918 departed and 1919 arrived there was a merry group in Company C. How different from a year ago, when in the midst of the Atlantic we were watching and wondering what the future had in store.

On February 13th we loaded bag and baggage into United States box cars and departed for headquarters where the 1st and 2nd Battalions were being mobilized, in what was but a short time ago a German army post and hospital.





## History of Company D

Camp Grant in September, 1918. We will long remember our arrival at the cold, unheated barracks, followed by the rush for uniforms in our anxiety to get started overseas. When we enlisted we were led to believe that only a few days were to be spent in the States, then we would sail for France. But alas! morning after morning, the weeks lengthening into months, reveille awoke us, not to the bloody battlefields of Europe, but to dreary days of drilling and hiking. By the latter part of November we were beginning to present a very creditable military appearance, and—rumors were flying thick and fast. Every few days a new date was set for our departure. Each new rumor had its adherents and opponents and a good deal of money changed hands back and forth on the strength of their convictions.

Finally the day came, and wild enthusiasm reigned. Truly we felt it was a dark day for the Kaiser. After traveling all night and until noon the next day we stopped at Detroit and took a hike through the streets of the city, where the snow in places was a foot deep. The next stop was at St. Thomas, Ontario, and we were given a royal welcome by the Canadians. Everyone seemed glad to see us, especially the young ladies, who flocked in numbers to see the Yankee soldiers. By a popular vote of the company, St. Thomas was declared the capital of the world. Disappointment was keen when we stopped at Camp Merritt. We became reconciled when we found that our stay would only be for a few days. Christmas dinner was served at Merritt and many of the boys spent the day loading barracks bags on our transport at the pier. Early the morning of the 26th, we started for the boat and arrived in time for dinner.

Below deck we were chased, to stay until the ship was out at sea. About dark off Sandy Hook we all swarmed upon deck to take a farewell look at the good old U. S. A. The first few days passed quietly. Most of our time was spent in looking up new places where one was not allowed to go, and in learning that you were not allowed to smoke on deck after dark. Guards were posted at every imaginable place on the ship. New Year's day found us in the middle of the Atlantic. The band struck up "We're going over" and our spirits were of the highest. On the morning of January 7th, 1st Lieut. Harry E. Gabriel, now captain of our company, while on lookout duty suffered a broken leg. This was caused by a large wave breaking over the bow and throwing him against the forward tackle on the deck. Landing by lighter at Brest on the 13th, the company boarded train for some supposed rest camp in the interior. The place turned out to be Camp Duquesne, which during the ensuing two months, afforded everything but rest. Probably we would have fared better had we arrived a few months later, but at that time labor was at a premium and there was a great deal of work to be done. All the boys worked hard and there was considerable sickness. On January 23rd, Private Frank Cochrane contracted meningitis here and died after a few hours illness. His death came as a shock to the men as he had always been a cheerful and popular

member of the company. On March 12th, we again enlisted and started on our long anticipated journey to the front.

After two nights and three days of travel we arrived at Sorey, and lined up on the station platform where we witnessed our first air battle. A German plane had crossed the American lines and was being greeted by the American "Archies" with a shrapnel barrage. Great was our excitement and rejoicing to think that at last we were in intimate contact with the Hun. Upon our arrival at Sorey new conditions confronted us. Lights were strictly "verboten" as the German planes were in the habit of coming over to search for and bomb the various camps in the back areas. It soon became apparent that much work with pick and shovel must be done before undertaking our proper task of railroad operation. The first shovelful of dirt was thrown early on March 15th. All during the spring and summer of 1918 we worked hard. Most of the work, owing to lack of suitable grading and excavating equipment, was done entirely by pick and shovel. Company B working out of Cornieville connected up with us near the village of Vortuzey and this was the day when we finally came into our own. Shortly afterwards we started hauling crushed rock from the two crushers near Sorey to various points near the front where it was used in road building. On May 31st, Company D took over the lines from Cornieville to Nauginsard and to Broussey, which, including the Sorey line, were now known as the Sorey division. On the night of June 16th, the enemy made a serious attempt to force us to abandon operations in the Nauginsard wood. After "lights out" our stations at Fond d'Esse, Neuf Etang, Cornieville and especially in the neighborhood of Nauginsard were heavily shelled. At Nauginsard our train crews took refuge in the operator's elephant hut. Shells ranging in size from 77s to 210s, gas and high explosives, were bursting less than a hundred yards away and the men lay for four hours in the hut with their masks on expecting any moment that a 210 would put an end to them. When the bombardment ceased about daylight it was found that the track had been blown out in a number of places and big trees cut down by shells had fallen across it.

As the summer wore into autumn the work of hauling supplies and ammunition in preparation for the offensive became more exacting. A number of crews were assigned to the construction department, building new artillery spurs, and relaying the Bois Chanot line and extending to the edge of the woods back of Rambacourt. Hundreds of sections of track, hundreds of tons of ballast were stored under camouflage along the various spurs near the railroad in anticipation of the extension across no man's land to a connection with German steel.

Three tractor work trains started hauling rail from the piles stored in the Bois Chanot, during the night of September 11th and by two A. M. of the 12th steel was being laid on the extension, connection with German steel being made on September 18th. On September 27th Private John P. Vanderdose was instantly killed by the

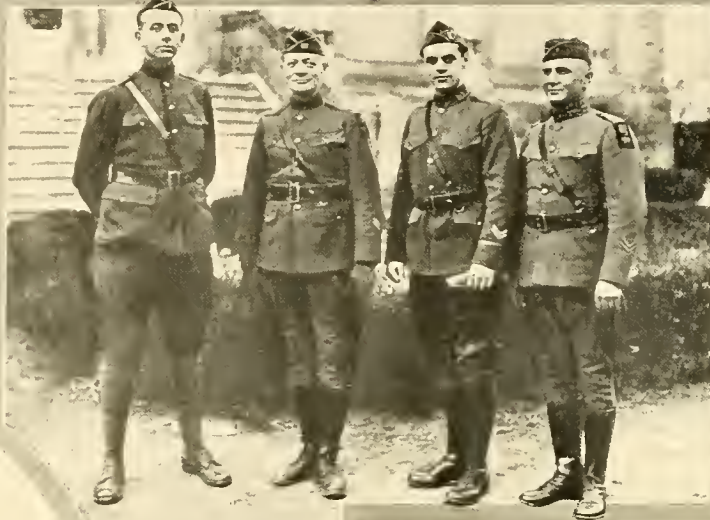




Co. D 1<sup>ST</sup> PLAT.

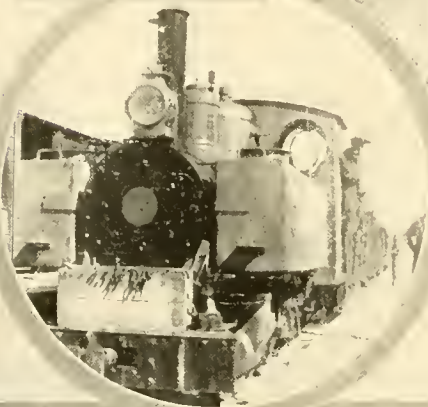


Co. D. 2<sup>ND</sup> PLAT.



OFFICERS  
Co. D.

TRAIN WITH  
WOOD FOR  
KITCHEN



ENGINE YARD.  
AT SORCY.



Co. D. 3<sup>RD</sup> PLAT.



Co. D. 4<sup>TH</sup> PLAT.



Co. D. 5<sup>TH</sup> PLAT.



Co. D. KITCHEN.



accidental explosion of a one pound shell. John was a faithful and cheerful worker and his death was a grievous loss. He was buried with all military honors at Vertuzey on September 28th. On October 1st an accident occurred near Woinville in which two members of the regiment sustained injuries and one lost his life. One of our steamers was conveying a string of empties towards Woinville about ten P. M. It was a very dark night and no lights were displayed owing to enemy planes and shell fire. Brakeman Rank, Conductor Hanna and Cook Frank Byrnes were riding on the head car, doing what little was possible under those condition to avoid accident when their train collided with a string of empties which the French had out on the main line. The head car upon which the crew was riding immediately turned over. Brakeman Rank of C Company was pinned under the car and crushed to death, Conductor Hanna also fell under the car and was badly bruised. Cook Frank Byrnes was thrown clear of the first car but the second struck him breaking his arm.

On the afternoon of October 7th all tractor crews were ordered to Montfaucon and on the following day two tractors and four crews left Xivray for the new front. On October 10th the balance of the personnel of the company were loaded into three trains and started on the long trip from Sorey to Esnes. After an exciting trip they arrived at Esnes close to the foot of Montfaucon on October 12th. Here they immediately took up the work of operating trains from Esnes to Montfaucon. Most of the track was German, abandoned during our offensive. After a few repairs we started hauling ammunition to the dump at Montfaucon. The enemy made many attempts to destroy the dump. On the night of October 22nd a Boche plane dropped a bomb within fifty yards of the track and a few feet from the edge of the dump: earth and rocks were showered on a train crew which had just arrived and a doughboy was struck on the head by a piece of flying shrapnel while in the act of leaping from the train to take cover. As November first approached

bombing and shelling became frequent and air fights were witnessed daily. On the night of October 31st the Boche played rather a rough Hallo'een stunt on the boys. He commenced dropping six-inch shells amongst their tents and compelled a hasty retreat to dugouts. On this night Engineer Geo. Bulla had hauled a train up to Romagne under shell fire until the fire became so hot that the crew was forced to abandon the train and take cover. Before he could get his mask on Bulla received a bad dose of gas and spent many weeks in the hospital, being blind for seven days.

On November 1st the American army resumed its offensive out of Romagne and a few days later the company moved up to this point and commenced hauling shells from Montfaucon through Romagne to Landres St. George where a new dump had been established. This work continued until the glad news was received that war had ended. The night of the armistice the boys put on a regular old time Fourth of July celebration, German star shells, red lights, green lights and barrels of powder being contributed to that end. The following month was spent in hauling ammunition from the scattered dumps along the front to Montigny under conditions that were anything but cheerful. Rain fell most of the time and cars and engines were continually leaving the track which was very soft. We were operating in a country that shortly before had been the scene of the last great battle. Bodies lay beside the track and in the fields still unburied. During this period we hauled some 15,000 tons of six-inch and 75 mm. shells to Montigny and some 2,500 cars of salvaged equipment from the surrounding battlefields of Cheppy.

On December 22nd the company left Romagne for Conflans and arriving there commenced operating standard gauge supply trains from there to Audun le Romain and Longuyon. After some two months of standard gauge operation we received the word that our engineers had pulled the last throttle and our trainmen given the last "high ball" in the land of the French, and now we are drilling daily and expect soon to see the good old U. S. A.







Co. E.  
1ST. PLAT.



Co. E.  
2ND PLAT.



OFFICERS  
- Co. E. -



Co. E.  
3RD. PLAT.



Co. E.  
4TH. PLAT.



Co. E. HDQ.



ENGINE YARD  
AT MENIL LA TOUR



## History of Company E

December 16, 1917 Company E entrained at Camp Grant on the first lap of their long journey which was finally to take them by easy stages to the Zone of Advance. The journey across the States and over the sea was made with the balance of the Regiment, but after disembarking at Brest, we did not see them again, with the single exception of the Headquarters Detachment, for about two months. Upon landing from the ship we marched up town to a Casual Camp for dinner, being greeted by the French soldiers and civilians with loud cheers. We also saw our first German prisoners, they standing with eyes and mouths wide open in amazement. After dinner, we marched to the railroad station and boarded our 8-40 Pullmans and after traveling two days and nights landed in the city of Nevers. Our train was switched over to a building which looked like an American freight depot, and after a breakfast of cold beans and hardtack, we hiked through the town, where we were again cheered by the French, and out into the country to a small town called Challeuy. Here we found a few barracks into which we proceeded to move with sinking hearts for the mud was knee deep both inside and outside, and with tree boughs and straw for bedding. Truly we were pioneers in those days. Many a one of us who had sat in a comfortable office as dispatcher or clerk, or who had pulled a throttle on some giant locomotive in the States were now being initiated to work with pick, shovel or wheelbarrow, and the cats were bad even though the corn willie was camouflaged.

After some six weeks we again packed up and moved towards the front, some going to Sorey and the balance to Menil la Tour. Here we could hear the roar of the guns and see the star shells at night as they lighted up "No Man's Land." Finally, at Menil, we got started on light railway operation. The first few days, the French were amused at our efforts to operate their dinky engines, but as we grew more familiar with them, they ceased laughing, as they noticed us increase engine tonnage rating more and more. We went to work with a will hauling big shells, small arms ammunition, rations and forage, and in fact everything that could ride a car.

Many a doughboy was saved a long hike on a hot summer's day when his turn came for a bath back in reserve. We always had our cars spotted up at the front long before the German observation balloons were up in the morning. Out first casualty was at "Dead Man's Curve" near Beaumont, when Engineer Broderick was struck by flying shrapnel and severely wounded, while handling an ammunition train.

The battle of Seichesprey in April found us still hauling supplies and ammunition, fortunately with no further casualties, although many times our crews had to leave their engines and seek shelter.

Late in the summer the 21st took over all narrow gauge lines between the Moselle and the Meuse and we moved to Belleville, a railhead on the Moselle.

For weeks before the St. Mihiel drive we had our share of hard work, at it day and night getting up big guns to

new battery positions and hauling ammunition and food.

There was no 16-hour law here and a day might mean 30 or 40 continuous hours on duty, and taking a chance on getting a bite to eat now and then.

One hour and thirty minutes before the first gun of the drive was fired we had placed the last gun of a great number of heavy long range railway guns. That was figuring pretty close, but luckily we didn't have any engines turn over that time or get any trucks off the track. When the barrage started at 1 A. M., September 12th, we knew what it had cost us to start them going and we felt that we had done well. During the drive we were called upon to transport tanks from one front to another which also was accomplished in record time.

Early in October we were ordered to pack up and move over to the Argonne Forest where smaller railroad regiments were unable to handle the work. Our entire equipment including all rolling stock, men and supplies were handled with our own power and crews.

Not being familiar with that part of our newly acquired territory we tied up for the night near the earlier battlefield of Seicheprey. Proceeding on our journey the next morning at daybreak we passed Montsec on our right. Many of the boys taking advantage of this opportunity visited the many dugouts and underground passageways back of the old German lines. We had salvaged a German field kitchen at Seicheprey and our cooks prepared a hot meal for us that noon.

On account of the scarcity of water, we stopped at dark on the top of a great hill on the edge of a forest. This line was parallel with the front, and the Germans were attracted by the exhaust of our engines owing to bad rail. About the time we had made ourselves comfortable for the night we were given a reception on a large scale, consisting of high explosives and gas shells. Our train crews were ordered to move around the hill where we were out of range.

At dawn we proceeded on our journey passing over the sites of many battlefields. Our trip was without further incident until within sight of our new camp when operator Hendry was thrown from a water car which jumped the track, pinning him between the car and the embankment, severing his leg above the ankle.

We arrived at Cheppy in the midst of the drive. We had heard many barrages before but none seemed to compare with this. The guns were going 24 hours of the day and the earth was in a continuous tremble, while at night the sky was full of flashes as far as one could see.

On account of the constant rainfall the roadbed was soft in many places and in many instances causing the engines to tip over. The Germans were offering very stubborn resistance and many divisions were required to maintain the offensive.

Thousands of tons of rations and ammunition were required for the men in the front lines, and our men performed almost superhuman feats that they might not lack the supplies so badly needed.

Construction always followed the line of advance

which, with the continual lengthening of the line of communication, required greater and greater efforts to place the supplies into the front line.

During the last drive in the Argonne before the armistice was signed, one of our crews was sent up to Apremont with B Company to connect up the German light railway with our own.

The steam engine was in plain sight of the German batteries and as usual they opened fire. One of the shells landed in the gangway of the engine and blew off Engineer Ritchie's legs and otherwise injuring him so badly that he died soon afterwards. Fireman Griffin was very badly injured. The boys of the company bought a marble monument to mark his resting place at Sorey where some old French lady has adopted it as a memorial to her own son who was killed and lies somewhere in the mud of Flanders.

With almost astonishing suddenness came the signing of the armistice. Our men were tired. The demand placed upon them was indicated by the strained look in their faces, but they were happy in the knowledge they had done their work well.

Over the light railway, via Cheppy and Aubreville, came the first train of refugees, a sight to be long remembered. These victims of an awful war had been in the hands of the Germans since 1914. They showed all the evidence of malnutrition and abuse.

For a time after the armistice we were engaged in "policing up" the battle fields, hauling away all scrap, old clothing, ammunition, etc. When we left Cheppy hopes were high of an immediate return home, but they were blasted when we moved to Longuyon and later to Audun le Romain where we were in standard gauge work for several months.

## History of Company F

On October 1st a detachment of recruits arrived at Camp Grant from Fort Wayne, followed a few days later by a detachment from Salt Lake, forming the nucleus around which Company F was built.

Captain Bowles was our first commander, assisted by Lieutenants O'Brien, Lewis, Gabriel, Dunn and Sparr. In December, Captain Banks came as Commander, bringing with him Lieutenants Waterbury and Plimpton from Company A, and Lieutenant Helwig from Company C.

Our first casualty was Sergeant M. E. O'Neal who died of pneumonia while on ship in midocean. He was buried at sea with military honors.

In our journey overseas we accompanied the balance of the regiment as far as Le Mans, France. From there the train took us via Orleans to Dijon. Remaining here all night in a German prison camp, left the next morning, passing through Chaumont to Villers le Sec. There we unloaded and marched three kilometres through the mud to Jon Chery (Haute Marne).

The 15th Engineers were stationed there and after giving us a breakfast of oatmeal and milk, started us to work around the camp. The following day the Company was assigned to railroad construction. The 15th was in charge of the work, which consisted of grading for yards and warehouses. About the first of March rumors became rife that we were soon to go to the front. Gas masks and steel helmets were issued. Then one night at retreat Captain Banks made a speech concluding with the words, "We are going to Baccarat, B-A-C-C-A-R-A-T." Finally, on April 11th, we broke camp, packed up, policed and paraded into Chaumont, to the envy and disgust of the 15th.

We took our places in "40 Hommes, 8 Chevaux" wagons and proceeded via Langres, Champigneulle and Nancy to Luneville. Lieutenant Plimpton, who had preceded us, met us at the Gare, and a hike was made through the devastated section of the town, up over the hills to peaceful Badmenil, where billets had been provided. We stayed there for a week and received our first bayonet drill. That looked rather serious and we half believed

that it was "over the top for us." We moved from Badmenil to the glass factory at Baccarat, and were attached for duty to the 117th Engineers. Here our work consisted of the construction of Soixante railroad towards the front. Although the work was often interrupted by air battles and planes falling in flames, we succeeded in constructing some railroad. Our military appearance, as we marched through the city was the subject of much comment. The jaunty straw hats, the nifty blue uniforms and the general nonchalant and distinguished air of the men marked them as being of a different order. Soon we became a part of the provisional battalion of Light Railways and Roads under the command of Major Sheets. While it cannot be charged that the change in management was responsible, nevertheless, it was at this time that we experienced our first real air raid. The billet was struck by a bomb but as the occupants were in the "Abri," no casualties resulted. As the raids became more regular, permanent quarters were taken up in the "Abri" by many.

Rapid progress was being made on the construction of the B. V. D. (Baccarat, Vagueville and Death), as it was popularly called. The operation of ration trains was started between Baccarat and Azerailles.

One very popular song at the time was as follows:

"Working on the B. V. D., we've been working on the B. V. D.,  
You can bend our rail with a tenpenny nail,  
Run all our engines on ginger ale,  
When you're working on the B. V. D. between death and  
eternity,  
Half our engines are in the shop,  
The other one runs with a skip and a hop,  
But we'll run the old railroad whether or not,  
Oh! Johnnie, Oh! Johnnie, Oh!"

Late in the Spring, Major Sheets left us and Lieut.-Col. Slifer came over from Sorey. Captain Banks and Lieut. Feehan went to Company D and Captain Nash came over as Company Commander. Then came the day when we had to leave Baccarat. Many were the sad partings.





Co. F.  
1<sup>ST</sup>. PLAT.



Co. F.  
2<sup>ND</sup>. PLAT.



Co. F.  
3<sup>RD</sup>. PLAT.



Co. F.  
4<sup>TH</sup>. PLAT.



OFFICERS  
Co. F.



SAW MILL  
YARDS.



APPROACH TO  
MENIL LA TOUR  
FROM SORCY.



Good judgment was used by our new skipper in not paying us before leaving Baccarat, and we departed in our "side door Pullmans" without much aboard besides our issue equipment. Arriving at Sorey, we admired the barren hillsides, looked with disdain at the barracks and started the now famous saying, "Now, when we were at Baccarat, etc."

Started working on roads and warehouses. Bombing during the day time showed to good effect the front line training we had received at Baccarat, and cigarettes were rolled and lighted with nonchalant abandon, while machine guns sputtered, bombs bursted and the "Archies" roared. About the first of August we moved to Menil la Tour, relieving Company E. Railroading on the Soixante then began in earnest. Derailments and engine failures were of daily occurrence and sleep was at a premium. Preparations for the drive continued, ammunition and supplies steadily moved towards the front. Soon after arriving at Menil la Tour, we lost Captain Jimmie Nash, relieved by Captain Mansfield, from Company E.

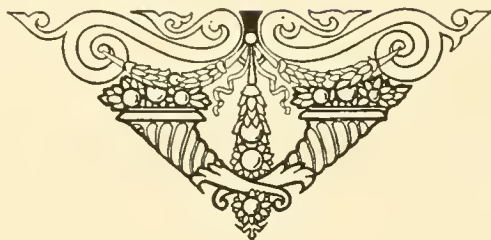
Then came the drive. Company F pulled the first train across "no man's land," Lieutenants Plimpton and Feehan with a detachment going to Thiaucourt. The Germans made that place too hot for them and they moved back to Navajo.

On September 26th, while repairing track near Thiaucourt, Lieut. Plimpton was killed by enemy shellfire. A

capable leader, a real man, a friend, and his going left us sad, though proud of having known such a man.

Work still continued, our advancing armies had to be fed. The movement of "flying circuses" or mobile batteries caused us much trouble, derailments were frequent. We were relieved by the 12th Engineers and early in October followed the First Army into the Argonne.

Arriving at Varennes, we took possession of an abandoned picket line and salvage dump, pitching pup tents, went into camp. Moved a few days later to River depot. Dugout parties were very popular here, owing to the shells and bombs. Newspapers were distributed to us once in a while via aeroplane and we soon learned to watch for our newsboy. Lieuts. Feehan and Clune took a detachment up to Champ Mahout to coordinate with the 317th Engineers on the Les Islettes line, hauling rations first to Apremont and then to Chatel Cheberry for the 42nd and 77th Divisions, old friends of ours, among them *our* Y. M. C. A. girl from Baccarat. Ration dumps later were established at Grand Pre, Senuc-Termes—and finally to Briquany and Buzanzy. Soon after the armistice we moved back to Dombasle and went into camp, two days later moving by trucks to Conflans. Here was given us an initiation into normal gauge operation. This work was completed in some two months and then we moved to Labry barracks for a few weeks of drill while waiting for sailing orders, back to the land of automatic couplers.





# History of Headquarters Detachment 3rd Battalion, 21st Engineers

## *ACT I—SCENE I*

The "Powers that be" in Military circles decided to organize another battalion of the 21st Engineers and assembled the men at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana.

After a few days of hurry and hard work they finally got the entire outfit doing "squads right" and "wrong," mostly the latter.

A little of this drilling goes a long way to the average



*Third Battalion Headquarters*

soldier, so when a call was made for all those looking for something easy to report at headquarters, there was a mad rush by those who were able, and after due deliberation on the part of the ones in whom was vested the power to choose, the brightest constellation of stars was chosen, and thus the Headquarters' Detachment of the 3rd Battalion, 21st Engineers came into existence.

## *SCENE II*

Alas how soon the awakening came. Each and every man soon found out that the offer of something soft was three-fourths camouflage and the other fourth fake. Everyone was put on an eight-hour shift, eight hours before lunch and eight after. The busy bee didn't have a thing on this crowd when it came to work. But the boys realized that the war could not last forever and the sooner the work was done the quicker they would get to France. The result was that on several occasions they even worked all night.

All our efforts were crowned with success and on August 20th, 1918, the Third Battalion mounted chair cars and started for parts unknown. On the 22nd we arrived at Camp Merritt.

## *SCENE III*

Once more all was hurry, work and excitement. The only difference being that of laboring twenty-four hours a day instead of sixteen. When we were issued our over-

seas equipment and taught how to roll a full pack we began to realize that the outfit was actually enroute to France. Some of the boys were lucky enough to receive twenty-four hour passes to New York City. They were all back on time and, strange as it may seem, sober upon arriving at Camp. On August 31st, bright and early, everyone fell out under full pack and the famous march to the sea, or river was started.

It looked as if we were trying to catch the last boat or else the man leading and setting the pace must have been riding a bicycle, because that hike would have made a bunch of Marathon runners look like the awkward squad doing "parade rest."

However when there is a beginning there must also be an end, and this hike ended at Alpine Landing on the Hudson, and none too soon, for while no men dropped out, that crowd dropped a few remarks that would have made one think something was due to drop, so let us drop the subject.

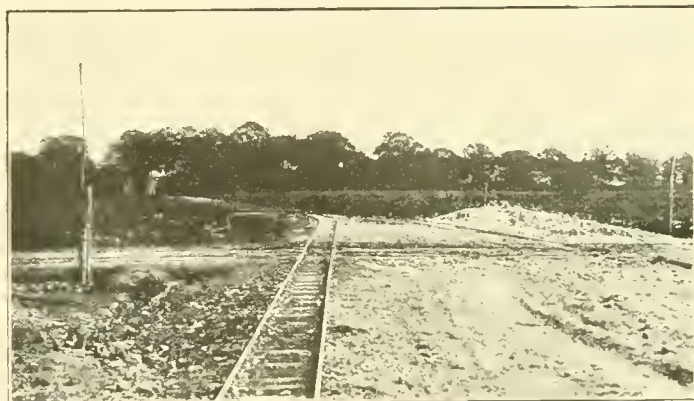
## *ACT II—SCENE I*

The men were all loaded on board a ferry, or perhaps the word "packed" would be better. At any rate, sardines in a can would have room enough to play a game of tag in comparison to the space we had on that ferry boat.

However they got us all across the river and on board the British freighter *Belgie* without any serious accidents. We are told that the *Belgie* was the largest freighter afloat, and have no room to doubt their word. In fact, some didn't have room enough to doubt anything.

## *SCENE II*

Mess was next on the programme and believe us it was some mess and a very unusual scene too. It was no doubt a test to find out if the men were all in good phys-



*Narrow Gauge and Road Crossing at Delaloule*

ical condition, and their digestive organs equal to the strain to which they were being subjected.

It was the meals that made us appreciate the size of the *Belgie*. The distance being so great from the kitchen to the mess hall that as soon as one meal was finished we

had to line up for the next one. Mother's cooking was beginning to be appreciated more and more.

The next day, September 1st, at 4 P. M., we sailed from the harbor and from the time the ship started until it landed the Belgie was kept in the center of the convoy, thus proving our statement of the importance of this outfit of ours as we were given all protection possible.

### SCENE III

On the high seas! The boys can't yet understand why they are always spoken of as high seas, because they were not nearly so high as some of the hills they had to climb to get to the ship.

About the second day out some of the men began to show us how tender hearted they were and how utterly imposible it was to allow the starving fish to suffer the pangs of hunger any longer, so they immediately proceeded to feed them and we will have to admit that these fish were the best fed members of the finny tribe in the seven seas.

About this time the majority of the headquarters detachment decided to change their boarding place and succeeded in bribing the stewards to put out some real feed, and while they were supposed to eat it on the quiet, they all were so glad to get it that the eating lacked a whole lot of being a quiet operation.

We had several submarine scares, but if there were any around they were wild ones and afraid to come up for inspection. The fact that having to sleep and eat in our life belts was very reassuring and we became so attached to them and they to us that it was quite an effort to separate from them when the time came to discard them.

On the 13th of September the convoy of 13 ships, after 13 days' voyage, and the Third Battalion with 13 officers reached Liverpool, England, and, yes, it was also Friday as well as the 13th of the month. This was good dope for the crepe-hangers and joy-killers to work on, but the only unlucky thing that could be figured out was that it was tough for the Germans.

Thus the much-talked-of ocean voyage was completed and everybody was impatient to get out on terra firma once more.

### ACT III—SCENE I

On land once more. We cannot truthfully say dry land, as it would be hard to make any of the members of



*Iron Mine Near Jarvy*

the A. E. F. believe there is such a thing as dry land in these "furrin" countries.

We paraded through the streets of Liverpool and out several miles to an English *Rest Camp*, called Knotty Ash. Stayed here one day, and were then loaded on one of those

toy trains that inhabit England and taken to Southampton, from which place we were marched to another *Rest camp*. That night upon arrival at the port, and the following afternoon we went on board the S. S. Yale and sailed across the English Channel to Le Havre, France.

There we stayed at a rest camp and about this time the definition of that well-known phrase "*Rest Camp*" began to be impressed upon our minds.

It is a place or rather a mud hole situated several miles out of a city over many hills and dales where troops are allowed to linger around in the slime and mud and wait for the ships and trains to "*rest*" until the journey can be completed.

It was here that one of the members of our detachment



*Ass and Others*

fell off the water wagon for the first time, and after getting on the outside of several kegs of English beer, challenged the 68th Engineers, either collectively or individually, to come out and get manhandled. One of them argued the matter over, but finally decided to save his fighting until it would be appreciated, and retreated to his tent.

Our next move was to Le Mans, and it was en route to this place that we were first initiated and introduced to the frog side door Pullmans, bearing the now famous 40 hommes ou 8 chevaux.

After battling with these about 24 hours, we stopped at Le Mans and were conducted on foot, of course, several kilometers to a newly established American camp, and told to put up our pup tents and reside there until further notice.

The mystery of the gas mask was cleared up, and after three days of practice we were pronounced proficient.

After a week at Le Mans we were again taken down and introduced to another string of box cars, ordered to board the same and proceed with the journey. On this trip it was demonstrated to us how easy it is to live two days on one day's rations of hard tack and corn willie.

### SCENE II

After two days' joy ride, we arrived at Gondrecourt and hiked to Abainville. Here all precedents were broken and our packs were hauled out to camp. This almost made marching a pleasure—almost.

The first week the detachment was quartered in barracks newly erected, and had access to the first shower bath since leaving Camp Merritt.

Then just as they were getting settled the order came to move down on the narrow gauge into box cars and here



took up our abode, having to walk about a mile to meals. Each man was assured of an appetite.

During the stay at Abainville, two rival newspapers started publication. The "Cootie Bulletin" and the "Latrine Eezema," the latter broke forth occasionally, and the former was a weekly edition.

While neither one ever had the circulation of the "Stars and Stripes," the news was concise and to the point and seemed to be enjoyed by all the subscribers.

Orders came and we left Abainville.

### SCENE III

On board the narrow gauge en route to some place.

While below Verdun the Fritzies thought they were about to be attacked by this doughty crew, and decided that their only escape was to sign something, so they did, signing the armistice, and this was, in the language of the Frog, "La Guerre finis."

But while "La Guerre" was finished the work was not, so we were taken out west of Verdun and told to decorate the hillsides with our pup tents, and rebuild the railroad between Verdun and Etain.

It took two weeks to finish this work and on Thanksgiving Day the outfit moved to Conflans, which is about twenty miles northwest of Metz. After locating in our new home the boys decided they needed some better furniture, and as there was a German hospital near, went out and salvaged a piano, beds, chairs, tables, and, in order that they might look like real soldiers, also took 12 large mirrors, so they could see for themselves whether or not they were dressed properly and would not have to take some officer's word for it.

After living in peace here for about three months, the outfit moved across the river to Labry and once more discovered that they were in the U. S. Army.

Formal guard mount is getting to be a common sight and it is authentically rumored that most of us will have a rifle to carry and keep clean.

As the Sergeants cannot be trusted with a rifle and as

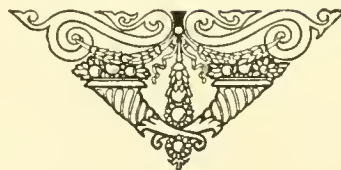
the mechanism is somewhat too complicated for their shallow minds, they will be armed with Carrie Nation's favorite implement of warfare, the hatchet.

Although it is an awful place to leave a bunch like this, there seems to be no other way out of it, so we will bring



*Jeanne d'Arc, at Mars la Tour*

this narrative to a close with the members of headquarters Third Battalion, 21st Engineers in Labry, France, waiting and waiting until those elusive orders arrive telling them to grab an armful of box cars and hie towards the good old U. S. A.





Co. G.



Co.G



OFFICERS  
Co. G-



Co. G.



DUMP-CAR



Co. G.



Co. G.



## History of Company G, 3rd Battalion, 21st Engineers

Company G, a part of the 3rd Battalion, 21st Regiment of Engineers, had its beginning at Fort Benjamin Harrison, July 19, 1918, and was organized as a shop unit for light railways, the personnel being made up of skilled mechanics familiar with general round house and gas engine work. After completion of the enlisted personnel, instructions in infantry drill and manual of arms began under the supervision of Lt. J. A. Wheatley. The company soon attained a high standard on the field and rifle range.

August 12th, 1st Lieut. Vahe was assigned to the company, followed August 15th by Capt. E. L. Messler, who relieved Lieut. Wheatley as commander. On the 19th 2nd Lieuts. Johnson and Maylock were assigned, completing the personnel of the commissioned men.

August 20th Company G, with other units of the 3rd Battalion entrained for Camp Merritt, New Jersey, where final preparations were made before sailing overseas. During the stay at Merritt the company received new O. D. clothing with other necessary equipment, and after numerous inspections was pronounced ready for France.

Orders came and on the morning of August 21st, Co. G with the battalion hiked down the long winding trail to Alpine Landing and were ferried down the river to the S. S. Belgic No. 405, upon which they embarked, sailing from New York Harbor Sept. 1st.

While on the high seas, Private Rivizzio was successfully operated upon for appendicitis, but when the company landed at Liverpool he was in such a weak condition it was necessary to transfer him to a hospital.

After a short stay at an American rest camp the company entrained for Southampton, where it embarked on the S. S. Yale, arriving at Le Havre, France, Sept. 16th.

Another hike and rest camp followed debarkation and the next evening the company boarded a troop train for Le Mans, at which place a week was spent in resting and gas training.

Sept. 26th the company entrained for Gondrecourt, arriving there on the 27th, and next day marched to the Light Railway shops at Abainville, where the men were quartered in real American barracks and soon made themselves at home.

During the following week the entire company was detailed for duty in the yards, grading and laying narrow gauge track. Pick and shovel work has its good features as well as drawbacks, but the one thing is certain is that it taught the men how to parade rest more perfectly than months of hard training on the drill field. The men not being acclimated to weather conditions, caused considerable sickness, which retarded work in the field. One death occurred. John A. Fox succumbed October 8th and was buried at Gondrecourt.

Outside work continued until Nov. 4th, when the company was placed in the shops for duty. This was a happy moment for the men, as it gave them an opportunity to display to the officers in charge just what their qualifications were, and the kind of work for which they were best fitted. Without doubt the fine efficiency in the shops and quality of the work turned out by the Central shops was in part due to Company G.

Until the armistice was signed the volume of work in the shops was so large it was necessary for the men to work night and day, assembling cars and engines, sending them out to facilitate the hauling of supplies and ammunition to the front.

Company G is proud of the record it has established in the shops and the work turned out by the men will always be remembered. Having few opportunities to achieve fame or make history, the company has handled the work allotted it with the greatest efficiency possible and takes greatest satisfaction in knowing that the job has been well done.



Co H - 1<sup>ST</sup> PLAT.

NOON  
MESS LINE  
COMP.  
"H"



Co. H - 2<sup>ND</sup> PLAT.



OFFICERS  
Co. H.



Co. H - 3<sup>RD</sup> PLAT.



Co. H - 4<sup>TH</sup> PLAT.

## History of Company H, 3rd Battalion, 21st Engineers

Company H of the 3rd Battalion, 21st Engineers, was formed at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind., July 19, 1918, from detachments of men experienced in railroad operation. Intensive infantry drill followed completion of the enlisted personnel; the men receiving instructions in the various formations and rifle practice.

The company left the Fort for overseas duty August 20th, with Capt. Herron, commanding. Arriving at Camp Merritt, New Jersey, a week was spent in final preparation, and on the morning of August 31st the men hiked to Alpine Landing, where a ferry was boarded bound for a New York City pier. The trip down the river proved interesting to those who had never seen the Hudson Palisades, and about 1 o'clock the company landed at New York and immediately went aboard the S. S. Belgic bound for England.

September 1st found the Belgic with Company H on board steaming out of the harbor and the long ocean voyage started for "Over There."

Landing at Liverpool, England, September 13th, a day was spent in resting and the company then entrained for Southampton, embarking for France on the S. S. Yale. The following morning found the company at Le Havre, and after much excitement and hurry the men were marched out to a rest camp. After a short stay spent in cleaning up and resting, Company H left for Le



Mans, where gas masks were issued and the men instructed in the use of same.

September 26th the outfit was on the way to Gondrecourt. Upon arrival they marched out to the Engineers' camp at Abainville, where all the men were detailed for pick and shovel work.

The first casual occurred October 10th, Nathan L. Bagley dying from pneumonia in the hospital. He was buried with military honors in the cemetery at Gondrecourt.

October 4, 1918, Company H was ordered to proceed by narrow gauge to Hatton Chatel, for duty in a stone quarry. Accordingly the company left Abainville at 9 o'clock P. M. in four train sections, made up of gondolas and flat cars. It rained all night, which made the journey a miserable one, the open cars affording no protection from the weather. A pilot was picked up at Sorey about midnight, and daylight found the company passing through the Mont Sec region. Another pilot was picked up at Woinville about noon, who conducted the company into Vignuelles. Here the troops detrained, marching up a steep hill to the stone quarry at Hattonchatel, the train going up with convoy later.

The enemy began shelling Vignuelles just as the men left that place, and it was at this time the company's first casualty occurred, Harry A. Straup, whom the exposure of the preceding twenty-four hours had rendered ill, dying of shell shock after being removed to a hospital. Upon reaching the stone quarry camp was made, shelter tents being used for the purpose. Tents later gave way to huts and barracks, material for which was salvaged from German structures in the nearby villages, and soon the men were well housed and comfortable. Among other articles salvaged was a complete enemy kitchen outfit, which proved to be a useful acquisition. Rations were not plentiful, but were supplemented by going into the German gardens at night and getting cabbage, turnips, etc.

This quarry before the war had been operated by the French, after the occupation by the Germans, and now was to be worked by Americans, the product to be used in ballasting light railway lines to Verdun, Company H being sent there to work this quarry and operate a section of the light railroads in delivering the ballast out on the line. While here several of the men developed flu, and were evacuated to the nearest hospital, where Corp. Charles H. Duffy and P. Lorenzo Hardwedge succumbed October 15th, the other men returning to the company later.

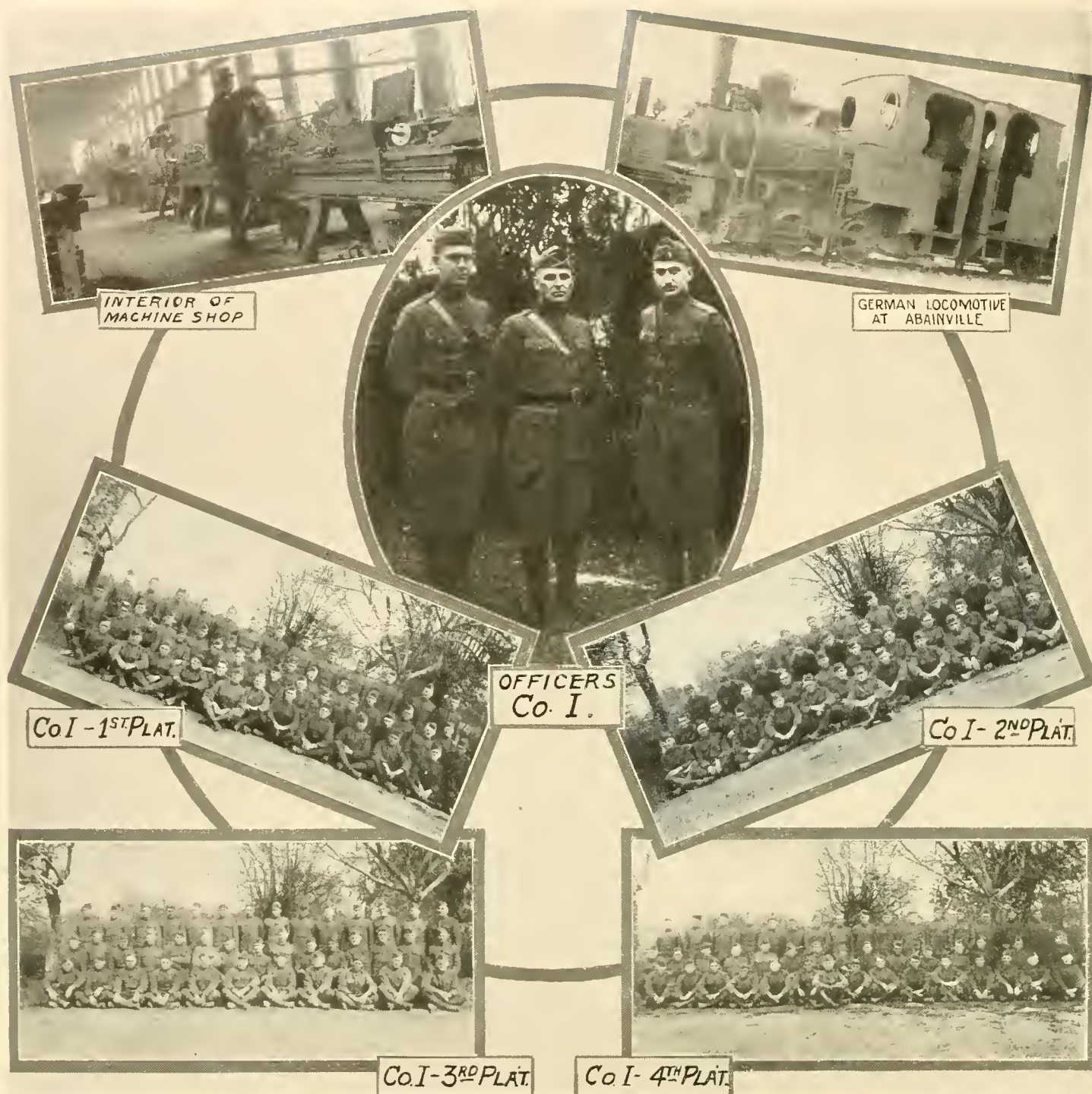
The company supplied its own track and engine crews and started operation under conditions that were unpleasant and difficult. Track maintenance crews were also a necessity, as the enemy frequently shot out track during the night.

November 3rd Company H was ordered back to Mauvages, as the work was completed at the quarry. This journey was accomplished by a thirty-six hour trip via narrow gauge. At Mauvages, only a short distance from Abainville, the company engaged in miscellaneous labor, the practice of furnishing the men by details being similar to that carried on at the latter place. Orders came and the company left Mauvages November 9th with Company I, Headquarters and Medical detachments of the 3rd Battalion. Travel was via narrow gauge and the destination proved to be in the vicinity of Fort De Tavannes, east of Verdun.

While stationed at this place an accident happened which is worthy of record here. Company H was in camp in the open on the road from Verdun to Fort De Tavannes. The weather was cold, several degrees below freezing, although it was only the 13th of November; the men had no other shelter than their "pup tents," and had built fires about which they were gathered in groups of ten or twelve. After breakfast on the morning in question, there was a terrific explosion in a fire around which twelve men were sitting. All twelve, frightfully injured, were given first aid by the Medical Officers of the Battalion and rushed away to the nearest hospital. One man returned to the company some weeks later, Robert E. McNamara died in the hospital, and the remainder are in casual camps or have been sent home. The fire, built in an old shell hole, from which the men had removed one "dud" and thought safe, had evidently ignited another unexploded shell, which must have been buried in the bottom of the hole.

The company then went to Abaucourt, where it remained repairing standard gauge track until November 28th, then in company with the Headquarters Detachment and Company I, proceeded to Conflans, and was assigned for duty on the standard gauge railroad with the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 21st Regiment Engineers. Finally the men were moved to Labry and, being relieved of all railroad work, were started drilling and getting ready to leave for America.

The company left Labry with the regiment, and while stationed in the Le Mans area, Sergt. Albert B. Wheaton died April 2nd.



## History of Company I, 21st Engineers

During the late summer of 1918 many engineering troops were leaving Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind., for ports of embarkation. August 22nd saw Company I depart with the Third Battalion, 21st Regiment Engineers, en route to the Atlantic seaboard.

Arriving at the embarkation center at Camp Merritt, the company occupied barracks for about a week, and were outfitted with overseas clothing and other equipment. All preparations were completed August 31st, and the company marched to Alpine Landing on the Hudson, and were transferred by ferry to Pier No. 58 on the North River. The Red Cross distributed cigarettes, ice

cream, and safe arrival overseas cards. Later the company boarded the H. M. S. Belgic, which remained docked until Sunday morning, September 1st, when the ship, making up a convoy of thirteen, set sail for France.

Following the course due north along the coast for three days, the weather grew damp and foggy. This did not tend to improve conditions. Congestion caused by the large number of troops, the quality of food considerably below army par, together with these few days of rough weather, all assisted in maintaining the maximum amount of seasickness. After thirteen days endured as steerage passengers, the transport dropped anchor in the Harbor



of Liverpool, England, on September 13th. The company was still intact, greatly due to the splendid physical condition of the men.

The people of Liverpool received them cordially, but otherwise England did not present any favorable impression; the climatic conditions being quite adverse, as it rained all of the time while there.

Marching from the docks through the streets of Liverpool to Knotty Ash Rest Camp, the company remained that night under the shelter of tents, leaving this camp the next day. The men were marched to the railway station and entrained for Southampton, at which place they arrived at midnight. The men were quickly unloaded and marched five miles to another rest camp; finding the same type of accommodations already experienced at Knotty Ash. The men rested as best they could in these quarters without unrolling packs, and the following afternoon returned to the docks, going on board the S. S. Yale, which left shortly for France. Seven hours on this speedy little boat brought them to the Harbor of Le Havre, and the French town Mairie gave them a royal welcome in the town's behalf. The men were then marched to a rest camp, where another night was passed.

The evening of September 17th they had returned from the rest camp and were on board the train leaving for Le Mans, France. During the seven days' stay at this camp in pup tents, they received gas training and were equipped with gas masks and helmets before being sent to the advanced section. They bade farewell to Le Mans about sunrise of September 26th, and after forty-five hours on the train, arrived at Gondrecourt about 9:30 P. M. September 27th, remaining on the cars until daylight. Abandoning the train, they marched from Gondrecourt to a camp near Abainville, where a round house and various other buildings of the narrow gauge railhead were located. Here they were sheltered in barracks for the first time, and it was with satisfaction that they could settle down into a more comfortable place after so much traveling.

Instead of being assigned to duties on the narrow gauge operating staff, which was their sole desire, fifty men were given picks and shovels for street grading; a day and night detail of fifty men each were detailed for transferring material from narrow gauge cars and track maintenance.

On trips to the front with trains of ammunition and supplies some of the crews experienced actual warfare, having to repair blowed out track ahead of them, both

going up and returning. Sometimes it was necessary to move the trains under the observation of the enemy by day, as it was unsafe to go at night, due to the condition of the track. Fortunately there were no men killed or wounded by these hazardous undertakings. On November 9th, Company I moved via narrow gauge with Company H to the west portal of the railroad tunnel east of Verdun. To reach this place the route led around Mont Sec, over numerous trenches, through forests, barbed wire entanglements and fields of shell holes, and finally reaching their destination not a great distance from "Dead Man's Hill."

Pup tents were stretched on one of the highest points in this neighborhood and beds were prepared on the cold ground, where the coldest weather yet experienced was endured for the next two weeks.

Here the company was assigned to standard gauge railroad work and operated a train through the tunnel Travannes eastward into Etain, Conflans and Metz. To Company I belongs the credit of taking the first train from there into Metz.

Due respect must here be paid to two men who were lost from the company by disease. Private Chas. F. Roe was sent to Camp Hospital No. 1 at Gondrecourt, France, on October 12, 1918, and died of broncho-pneumonia at 12:45 P. M. October 29th. Burial was made at Gondrecourt Hospital Burial Ground.

Private Adolphus B. Curtiss was sent to Evacuation Hospital No. 8, G. H. Q., A. E. F., No. 111, November 30, 1918, and died of tuberculosis January 21, 1919. Burial was made at Toul on January 22, 1919.

Thanksgiving Day, Company I was ordered to Longuyon, Meurthe-et-Moselle. Dinner, supper and breakfast were had on the train, arriving at Longuyon before noon of the following day. At this place the company was attached to Company E for duty.

Moving to Audun-le-Roman on December 13th, they were assigned to operating trains, station and round-house. Of the 235 men left in the company, 213 were used in connection with railroad work on a 12-hour daily shift.

About February 20th all other companies of the regiment were relieved of railroad duties, Company I being left to operate their assigned division. When the regiment left Conflans for the embarkation center at Le Mans, the company was prepared to entrain on short notice, and when the order came they turned their duties over to the 63rd Engineers, and left Audun March 22, 1919, on an American special train.



## History of Fourth Battalion Headquarters' Detachment

At first the headquarters of the Third and Fourth were mixed up like a lot of cooties and fleas on a soldier. About August 20th the Third was weeded out and sent away, and we got down to business. Of course, the Battalion would be out of luck trying to go anywhere without its headquarters, so when a gust of orders blew them out of camp, we went along even though the passenger lists and supply records were not completed. We had space in a first-class standard Pullman and splendid beds or bunks, but a "buck" in the army would call a bed in "Queen Anne's Chamber" a bunk.

Some of our gang were of the thirsty variety and hailed from Tulsa, Oklahoma, a good place to pick material for soldiers. Said Tulsan slipped the porter a couple of "ducats" to smuggle in a quart, which he did not, confiscating the funds. This started a riot and a subsequent hearing before the C. O. After all evidence was in, the matter was dropped and the coon made a hasty exit. Meanwhile we were speeding on to Camp Merritt, arriving there September 1st about sunrise. We fell in and did the forward ho to the camp, where they must have had the points of the compass camouflaged, as no one seemed to know one direction from two. Needless to say, we stood in line for an hour or so, after which we received gruff orders to set up an office in one of the shacks and "Make it snappy." And that office! The very mention of it spells work to all who came within sight or hearing (G. O. 2). Due to some marvelous accident, all records were completed in time to get sailing orders and board the prescribed boat. Boarding the boat sounds simple, but wait—remember it was a dark night and the heights of those palisades! We must have ascended several thousand feet, and none of us could think of any mountain lakes or trout streams up that high that would get us to France, so began wondering if we would have to walk down the other side. Strict order "No one to talk or even strike a match." Perhaps some boche was at hand ready to pounce upon us poor defenseless soldiers. After hours we reached the summit and began on the down grade; not so steep at first, but when we hit the real bluff above Alpine Landing on the Hudson, the best of the mountain climbers found it steep enough to satisfy them. Daylight was breaking when we arrived at the landing, and as the ferry boat was snubbing up, we did not have to wait long. No corner was left unfilled and away we went in a tangled mass down the old Hudson. The more curious kept an eye open to see the sights, but most of us went into sonorous oblivion.

About 11 o'clock we found ourselves at Army Pier No. 5, where the Red Cross issued some food and safe arrival cards. A little later we filed up the gangplank, receiving meal checks and a card stating the number of our bunks. The Navy has it all over the Army for rotten slum, giving a hot potato and a dipper full of beans with bread and coffee on the side.

Sunday morning, September 8th, the Manchuria let go with one of those terrific shrieks from the siren, echoed by three Army tugs from the harbor. She wasn't a bad

boat, being rated at 27,000 tons. A short way down the river the Cruiser Huntington fell in ahead of us, the band on deck playing "Over There."

We were not more than half a day on before we began to receive orders about what we could and could not do. "Don't light a match or smoke after dark; don't throw anything overboard; wear your life belts all the time; find out where your life raft is and get to your assigned place when the whistle blows." With us were the 133rd Medical outfit and 55th Ammunition train, more numerous than ourselves. First it was Company K in the hole and next it was Company B, 55th Ammunition train, forward on this deck. Maybe everybody was ordered below and the hatchways were again jammed. About the time all men were down, the melodious voice of some Sergeant would call out, "Everybody on deck." So we went up and down, and no one seemed to get anywhere. In the morning we had to stand by until daylight came, and in the evening we had to stand by till darkness was upon us. This was endured for three or four days only, until we were out of the danger zone. One fine afternoon someone got the bright idea that a bath might be good for the morale effect if nothing else. A bunch of gobs were put on the hose detail, and two large streams of unadulterated Atlantic solution were emitted from this camouflaged shower bath. All wishing to partake were to simultaneously evacuate bunk and clothes and brave the cool breezes of the Gulf stream. A goodly number partook and apparently enjoyed it as much as the unsanitary bystanders who shunned to take a bath.

Neither were we without our submarine scares. Some of them turned out to be schools of fish or a frolicking whale, but the gunners seemed ready to crack down on anything suspicious looking and find out afterwards what it was. We scrambled to the deck one morning at one o'clock and stood sleepily in the rain for about an hour while the destroyers went bombing in the distance. Seasickness lurked among us and some even felt so utterly unnecessary that they wished a sub would send over its best torpedo and add the Manchuria to the list of "Lost in Action." Those possessed of the malady usually spent time above deck where the air was fresh and also for sanitary purposes. When anyone wanted space at the much coveted rail, none interfered, as the case was generally urgent.

On September 19th, ten destroyers swelled our convoy and escorted us into Brest. The morning of September 21st anchors were lowered and we remained on board long enough to partake of something supposed to be dinner. We were loaded on lighters and taken ashore. To set foot on land again was a rare treat and not a man among us denied that he had a feeling of satisfaction when he found himself again on terra firma. About half of the men remained on ship in charge of a corporal, to look after battalion baggage and go ashore with it, which they did a few days later. The remainder of us, and the three companies adjusted packs and staggered up the long hill leading past Pontenazen Barracks. After a march of about



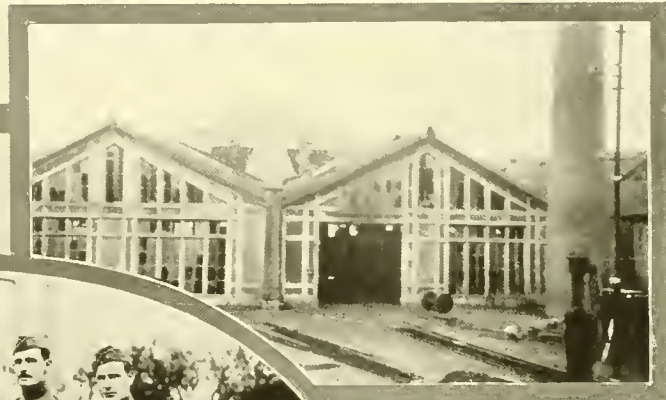
six kilometers we came to a nice muddy plot which was to be our camp. It consisted of two small farm plots, surrounded by earth banks typical of that section. Luckily, we were favored with sunshine and the place was not so muddy as it might have been. All were soon engaged in pitching pup tents and were soon under shelter. I was

on the gas house somewhere in the dark distance through mud and around numerous kinks and corners. As the gas house was out of order we returned and at a late hour lay down for a needed rest, but were up soon preparing for the long hike to the station.

We were placed in a third-class coach and the supply



4TH. BN.  
HDQ.



ENGINE HOUSE  
CONFLANS



OFFICERS  
4TH. BN. HDQ.



LEONVAL  
SALVAGE DUMP



ROAD NEAR  
FONDEVESSE



BOMB HOLE AND  
RAILROAD SCENE  
AT LABRY.



ROMAGNE  
EN ARGONNE

lucky enough to pick a small man as space was at a premium.

We lived in the rain and mud until September 28th, when shortly after noon we left the old farm for more suitable and healthful surroundings in squad tents near Pontenazen Barracks. Late in the evening, when every one was busy fixing up the new quarters, we were informed that we would entrain early in the morning. Work ceased and gas masks were issued. After supper the battalion moved

department loaded in rations for three or four days. The French lost no time in clearing the block and we were off on what proved to be a 72 hour journey. The trip was interesting but tiresome, due to the crowded conditions and hard benches. Some of the rum hounds demonstrated the keenness of their olfactory organs at a stop along the line the second day. It was a tank car full of "Vinegar Blink" and as many as could get on top were dipping out of the manhole with mess cups. Lieut. Baker of Company



M. was hero of the day and scattered the mob. One soldier in his madness leaped from the car with a cup full of the goods, giving the crowd below a good sprinkling.

Early in the morning of the third day, the train came to its final stop so far as we were concerned. We remained in the cars until daylight and after a meal of corned beef and hard tack, unloaded the supplies and prepared for the hike which we knew must be before us. To our surprise it was short and we arrived at Abainville about dinner time, where we enjoyed salmon and jam in G Company's mess hall. We renewed our acquaintance with the Third Battalion, who were operating the Abainville railhead and shops of the narrow gauge. Trains of flat cars were made up and we were on the first train to depart. The entire battalion was moved that day to the village of Mauvages, about twelve kilometers away. Here we found an old town partially inhabited and were billeted in barn lofts, sheds, cellars and sundry other places. Headquarters drew a cellar and took up bunks previously occupied by French or American soldiers. We expected to acquire a flock of those little parasites peculiar to soldiers—cooties. Perhaps the quarters had been disinfected or the cooties died of starvation, as we acquired none and could not add them to our list of discomforts.

The office was soon doing the regular twelve or more hours shift. Others of us found time to explore the country side until guards were put on at all outlets of the town. Before October was consigned to the salvage heap, duties had been found for the companies on the Soixante at Sorey, Menil-la-Tour and Woinville. Headquarters with K Company moved on the narrow gauge Oct. 28th to Sorey, where Company M was taking charge of the work on the road. Sufficient room was found in one of the barracks for our "Twenty-four," and we lost no time in moving in. Squad tents were erected across the road to accommodate the office, supply department and officers' mess. Later, when the 12th Engineers moved away, the tents were discarded, an office was constructed in the front of our barracks, and electric lights installed, which gave it the appearance of a real office.

Prior to November 11th men who had been out on the road would bring back hair raising tales of the war, but we saw very little of it, with exception of a few Boche planes and the distant roar of guns.

On October 31st we had a treat which many of us had not experienced since dispensing with civilian clothes. The payroll had passed the censorship of the Q. M., and he was on hand with "Beaucoup Francs." Our stay in Sorey was looked upon by most of us as the most desirable place we had yet been. We had good quarters, a good office, access to a commissary, and were able to obtain daily papers.

On December 7th we loaded our all on the petit gauge and the morning sun saw us unceremoniously depart over the line leading through the famous Sorey cut in the gen-

eral direction of Conflans, where we were to join the regiment. The trip led us through Cornieville, Neuf-Etang, Woinville, past Mont Sec, through Billy and Vigneulle to Droitamont, arriving there after dark. A large section of the battle field had been traversed, which held our interest and made the journey seem shorter. We spent the night at Droitamont in a German "Kantine." The floor was hard enough to insure us a good rest, and we were up before daylight, feeling quite refreshed. By noon all supplies and men had been transported by truck to Conflans, the next stop over. Again that night we enjoyed German accommodations in the building where the Supply Department had settled. The next day, separating the Battalion Office supplies from the stock room, we proceeded by truck to Metz to assume liaison duties in connection with the Sous-Commission De Reseau at that point. A company of Military Police made room for us in the barracks they occupied in one of the French casernes. A list of the names of all the men were submitted to the A. P. M., and the next day we all secured passes good in any part of the city. We soon learned where to find the best cafes, and many of the men apparently lost sight, for the time being, of the fact that they had a wife and family at home. A few days after our arrival, Corporal Mark Hardin was taken sick and sent to a British Hospital in Metz. Late in December he was transferred to a base hospital in Toul and died on January 1st. Hardin was an industrious man, and his services were almost indispensable in the office.

Battalion work was executed at the office, which was located in the old railway station, or "Alten Bahnhof," as it was locally known. The office was connected by phone to the Conflans station and was used for transmitting messages pertaining to railroad work. Later a telegraph instrument was installed, which facilitated the work. A 24-hour shift was maintained at all times. Some of the men were placed on duty in the yards checking cars.

Early in February the office force was reduced and recalled to Conflans, leaving a few men to carry on the liaison work, which had decreased. Those returning arrived by train at Conflans, some on the morning train and the balance in the evening. A short hike brought us to the Caserne at Labry, where quarters were found in M Company's barracks. The two light trucks assigned for battalion duties made several trips between Metz and Conflans, bringing baggage, beds, furniture, etc. Our quarters became quite comfortable after a day or so. Later we were averse to evacuating in favor of E Company. The chateau in the town of Labry, which we occupied, proved even a better place, and we found no reason to complain after having moved. Now that the regiment is practically all assembled, we are anxiously awaiting the day when we will "Partee Toot Sweet" for that much-talked-of embarkation port.



## History of Company K

The rather brief history of K Company begins at Fort Benjamin Harrison. It was the month of July, 1918, when they began to assemble at that well-known Engineers Mecca from all four corners of the earth and Texas. There were gas engineers, as well as locomotive engineers, civil, sanitary, mechanical, electrical, in fact, representatives from most of the known trades and professions.

We were a shop company. It was supposed we would take over some of the large railroad shops in France, but subsequent developments proved that we were fitted for most any kind of work known to military minds. It was the latter part of August when we had received our "Three Day Issue" of rifle range practice, and had our trials and tribulations in getting the gas mask on in "Nothing Flat." Having received all the training thought necessary for our sojourn in France, on the afternoon of August 30th we entrained for Camp Merritt, N. J., and it was then that we first began to realize that we were on our way "Over There."

At the end of one day and two nights traveling we arrived at Camp Merritt, where we were to spend four days and as many nights "falling in" and "falling out," in a vain and futile attempt to find out if every one had "two pairs of shoe strings." The new O. D. suits, overcoats, blankets, and winding leggings, of course, were issued to us here, but evidently they amounted to nothing in comparison to those ever evasive, illusive "two pairs of shoe strings."

Captain Hadden, whom we all liked very much, had come from Fort Harrison with us, but Capt. McIntyre was now assigned as our company commander, and on the morning of September 5th we started at 4 A. M. on that well-remembered hike to the ferryboat, which was to take us down the Hudson to the U. S. Transport Manchuria, at Hoboken. Already the fame of Company K had begun to shoot forth its buds, and we were honored by being selected from several thousands other intelligent, industrious soldiers to police up the ship and get everything as comfortable as possible for those who were to have the distinction of making the voyage with us. Not even the old "Globe Trotters" of the company had any idea of how much area there was to be covered with a mop and broom on board an ordinary transport until we had cleaned and scrubbed from the top decks, six stories down. Evidently the naval officers had no idea of how many men there were supposed to be in an engineer company, for every few minutes some of them wanted a small detail of fifty or a hundred men for more cleaning.

Sunday morning, September 8th, the old "Wild Cat Shouts" sounded a few times and we were off for France. Our convoy consisted of nine transports, one battle cruiser and four destroyers, which was probably sufficient protection; but most of us were wishing we had a whole battle fleet for company. Aside from living "A la packed sardine style," sharing our meals with the deep sea fish, scrambling "Up on deck" and "Down in the hole," all times of the day or night to stand inspection, or wait patiently for the expected torpedo to hit, the voyage was pleasant.

On two occasions a submarine was sighted and fired on, and a few depth bombs dropped to jar up pleasant recollections from the sub commander.

Thirteen lucky days having passed, we arrived at the port of Brest on the morning of September 21st. A beautiful harbor from a few miles out, but oh, how rapid the change on a closer view.

The long hike from the water-front to the "Rest Camp," pitching our pup tents in the mud, working from dark to dark building barracks for the less sturdy negro troops; the "Regular ten day issue of Slum Gullion"; being awakened all hours of the night by the "Top Kicker" to go on water cart detail (only a mile and a half up and down hill to the nearest drinking water); awakening to find that the little drainage ditch around your pup tent was too small, and water was collecting in pools under your blanket; all imprinted themselves deeply on the minds of most of the company and left pleasant recollection of Brest.

On the morning of September 29th we were called for Reveille at 2 A. M. and marched down to the train, and by 8:30 were rambling eastward to we knew not where. For three days and three nights we bumped along and finally arrived at Gondrecourt. It was dark when we arrived, so we left our packs in the cars and spent the night running up and down the track to keep warm. Some of the bunch started several bonfires in the midst of several thousand barrels of gasoline; they were a bit peeved when Capt. McIntyre ordered all fires put out, not only because the gasoline might take a foolish notion to explode, but also because we were sufficiently near the front for our fires to arouse the interest of some Boche flyer.

Next morning we marched to Abainville, where the Third Battalion was stationed, and had our first glimpse of the narrow gauge, and the watch-charm model locomotives which were to play a part in our future maneuvers. All the while we were anxiously looking around for "the large shop" we were to take charge of, but no such luck. By evening they had decided what disposition to make of us, so we were loaded on flat cars and started for Mauvages, a quaint little French village half way between Gondrecourt and Sorcy. On the way there two or three of the flats jumped the track and the confusion that followed in trying to let the engineer know that part of his train had taken out across country was mistaken for a gas attack alarm and a few of the braves had their face in the trusty gas mask in a little less than the proverbial "Nothing Flat." It was a simple matter to put the cars back on the rails with the aid of so many strong backs, and by getting off to push occasionally we arrived safely at Mauvages a little after dark. Then, in groups of fifteen or twenty, we were assigned to our "barn yard billets," and began the old simple life with the cows and chickens. Still we were looking for that mythical "Big Shop," but instead were introduced to a young mountain from which we were to pick out the large rocks, make them into little ones, and load them on cars with the assistance of a "No.





Co. K.  
1<sup>ST</sup> PLAT.



Co. K.  
2<sup>ND</sup> PLAT.



OFFICERS  
— Co. K. —



NARROW GAUGE  
LOCOMOTIVE



ROMAGNE  
ARGONNE SECTOR



Co. K.  
3<sup>RD</sup> PLAT.



Co. K.  
4<sup>TH</sup> PLAT.

2." We were now close enough to the front to hear the roar of the big uns and were forbidden to have any lights in our stables. That made it nice in going to bed and getting up, as well as eating in the dark, for it seemed that those little rocks were urgently needed and we could not waste any daylight. It rained every day and every night, and it was so hard to roll out and get lined up by 4:45 A. M. that our Top Kicker all but lost his religion. For twenty-six days we made violent attacks on those large rocks, and on October 28th our forces were withdrawn. Half were sent to Sorey along with Battalion Headquarters, and the other half sent to Washington, under command of Lieuts. Machunas and Martin to be attached to Company A, 12th Engineers. Washington was formerly a German camp in a thick woods and marsh, two kilometers south of Heutecourt. The Germans probably took the name of the camp with them in their hasty departure,

so it was given a real American name. At that time Washington was too close to the front lines to be a real comfortable place to reside, and on the night of October 28th, when the detachment crept up that way on the narrow gauge, the sky was lighted unusually bright by bursting shells, while aeroplanes made an uncanny buzzing noise overhead. We unloaded at Washington about 11 P. M., and beat it for the nearest huts and dugouts to spend the night. With the dawn, the situation grew brighter, and everyone was routed from their huts and assigned to jobs; some in the roundhouse, others running engines, firemen, brakemen, etc., and a few as operators and train dispatchers. The roundhouse was in reality only a little camouflaged shed where the engines could find cover and a few repairs; so in a few days some of our men were sent from Washington to build a new roundhouse and also new billets at the foot of Mt. Sec. No lumber being provided



beforehand for the proposed roundhouse, our men, who were just learning the art of salvaging, proceeded to tear down an old German prison camp and in a short time had a spacious roundhouse and barracks, to which we moved in November.

A month after their landing at Brest, they had served their time on the rock pile and were an important cog in the wheels of that intricate narrow gauge system. Many of the trainmen had exciting, as well as humorous, experiences during the time they were working under shell fire. One of our engineers pulling four cars of ammunition had the track blown out just a few yards behind his last car, and many times while making up trains or switching the trainmen sought cover under the little narrow gauge cars. Several air battles were witnessed from the period between October 28th and November 11th, since three captive observation balloons were anchored in the vicinity of Washington and the "Jerry" planes made daily efforts to get them.

While the detachment sent to Washington were having their thrills operating narrow gauge, the rest of us who had gone to Sorey were sub-divided, some being assigned to jobs in the narrow gauge roundhouse at Sorey and others as trainmen on the broad gauge. But the larger part were sent to Grosrouvres on November 1st and attached to Company D, 21st Engineers.

It seems that if we were ever intended to take charge of "Those large shops" we were also intended to build the shop first; so we started on the construction of a

roundhouse for the miniature locomotives and had just completed it on the day the Armistice was signed. Some of us were now assigned to shop work and others as train crews, for the Army at the front were still in need of vast supplies, and the trains coming back brought surplus ammunition as well as liberated prisoners. For the next three weeks we continued work here, taking our allotted days off for excursions into "No Man's Land" in search of souvenirs and sight-seeing, each trying to cover the most areas in the shortest time, and some forgetting to come back just when they should.

On December 7th the entire company moved to Conflans. We only got as far as Droitaumont the first night, when we camped in some old German barracks, and on the following morning marched to our new home. We were to live in real stone houses now, but before being able to wade into them, it was necessary to remove a good many truck loads of dirt and rubbish.

At last we found the "Big Shops," and on December 9th were assigned to our respective jobs as machinists, boilermakers, electricians, hostlers, clerks, etc. Company K also had fourteen men comprising a wrecking crew who, working with more or less improvised tools and machinery, cleaned up a number of wrecks, sometimes working 24 to 36 hours at a stretch.

During the time we had charge of the shop until relieved by the French on February 26th, we had one of the best working and most efficient shop organizations in the A. E. F.

## History of Company L

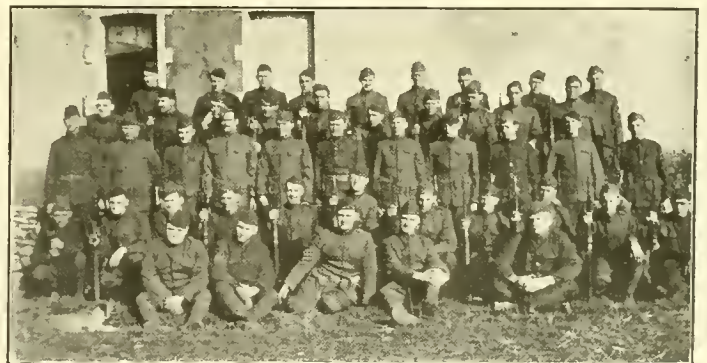
Company L, a part of the Fourth Battalion, 21st Engineers, was formed during August, 1918, at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana. They left there August 30th and travelled over the "Big Four Route" to Camp Merritt, N. J., for embarkation. Arriving at Dumont station about sunrise Sunday morning, September 1st, a short march brought them to the camp, where barracks were assigned, overseas clothing and equipment were issued, and all preparations were finished. Early in the morning of September 6th they constituted part of the many troops that marched to Alpine Landing on the Hudson. There they boarded a ferryboat which delivered them to U. S. Army Pier No. 5 at Hoboken about eleven o'clock in the morning.

Boarding the U. S. S. Manchuria, they lay at the pier until Sunday morning, September 8th, when tugs brought the boat clear of the pier, and the journey was started. After thirteen days at sea, the transport dropped anchor in the harbor at Brest, France, on September 21st.

Going ashore on lighters, the company fell in line with the remainder of the battalion and marched to a camp ground about six kilometers distant. Here pup tents were erected, and they made the best of the discomforts. While here the men of the company rendered able assistance in the construction of barracks near Camp Pontenazen.

They moved to squad tents near the construction work September 28th, but before getting settled orders

were received to prepare to entrain bright and early the next morning. Gas masks were issued and the company made a vain trip to the then out-of-order gas house. At two o'clock the following morning the company left for the station at Brest, reaching it shortly after daylight.



*Company L, First Platoon*

The train was waiting and with the minimum amount of delay, the journey started. It was a long and tedious trip, and after seventy-two hours the train was abandoned at Gondrecourt, October 2nd. From there the company marched to the nearby town of Abainville, where they entrained on the narrow gauge railway and arrived at Mauvages late in the afternoon of October 2nd.

Billets were found in barns, houses and cellars formerly occupied by troops who had constructed crude bunks which were accepted at first with scruples, since this was the initiation to what proved the standard practice when better accommodations were impracticable. The company became established in their new quarters, fatigue clothes were issued, and the men assigned to duty quarrying and crushing rock at a point near the town immediately across the canal. The rock so obtained was used as ballast for the narrow gauge roadbed along the main line leading from Abainville to Sorey and also on other lines. The rock was blasted from a small butte at a convenient place



*Company L, Second Platoon*

in close proximity to the railroad. A small detachment of ordinance men were in charge of an ammunition salvage dump near by and from them were obtained German "potato mashers," grenades and powder, all of which were used for blasting. While these were dangerous, other supplies were not available and they accomplished the desired results.

On October 18th the company was detached from the remainder of the battalion and directed to proceed to Menil-la-Tour, France. There they were attached to the 12th Engineers, who were operating the U. S. Light Railways out of that point.

A few days later Lieut. J. Z. Stansberry, commanding Company L, was appointed Superintendent of the Southern Division. He immediately manned the road with the personnel of the company, most of whom had railroad experience. Each man was examined by the commanding officer as to his qualifications and placed on the work for which he was best fitted and the division was operated with success.

During the company's stay at Menil-la-Tour a detachment was used in building a line of communication through old "No Man's Land." This was a very difficult task, owing to the numerous shell holes and barbed wire entanglements. Numerous trenches added their part toward making the work more difficult and considerably lowered the average amount of track laid per day.

The Armistice was received with great expectations and construction ceased. All were looking forward to going home when orders were received to move via narrow gauge railway to Conflans on December 7th. On that day the company left Menil-la-Tour in three sections, the trains being operated by crews from the company. The narrow gauge terminated near the town Droitaumont,

about four kilometers south of Conflans. The company left the train there late in the afternoon and spent the night in an old frame building which had formerly been a German "Kantine." Early the next day they marched to Conflans, where Regimental Headquarters of the 21st Engineers was located. There they entrained on the standard gauge and proceeded to Pierrepont, France, located about eleven kilometers from the Belgian boundary and about the same distance from that of the Duchy of Luxemburg.

Portable barracks erected by the Germans afforded comfortable and convenient quarters. The company settled down to maintenance work on the standard gauge, then operated by the 21st Engineers as a regiment.

A part of each day was spent on the drill field by those not on maintenance work. January 20th the company rejoined the regiment, which was then mobilizing at Conflans.

On February first the 24th Grand Division of Standard Railways was reorganized, Lieut. Stansberry being appointed Superintendent of Terminals at Conflans. The men of Company L were again assigned to railroad duties and demonstrated their ability to handle standard equipment equally as well as troops organized for that work.

The 24th Grand Division was turned over to the French on February 20th, thus relieving the officers and men of Company L from railway duty. Drilling was taken up at once by the company and vigorously adhered to, as it was one of the pre-requisites to returning home.

This company has repeatedly been complimented by inspecting officers for its general appearance of personnel, camp uniformity and neatness. Seventy-five per cent. of the men of the company had more or less railroad experience before entering military life. They not only demonstrated their ability in that line, but were always ready to meet any conditions however diversified they might be. The individuals worked together harmoniously co-operating to act as a unit.

Lieut. J. Z. Stansberry, later promoted to Captain, was alone in command of the company from August 27th until October 10th, when Lieut. Charles L. Turley re-



*Company L, Third Platoon*

ported for duty and was assigned to Company L as second in command.

At the date of writing the sole duty of the company is to do its required number of hours on the drill ground each day and wait for the time thought of and spoken of every day, when orders come to start making preparations for the trip homeward.





## History of Company M

Company M was organized in August, 1918, at Fort Benjamin Harrison, under the command of Capt. Candee, Lieut. Baker succeeding him as commanding officer on August 28th, and on the 30th the company boarded train for the Coast. After staying at Camp Merritt one week, at 2 P. M. September 6th they marched to Alpine Landing on the Hudson, where they boarded a ferryboat and landed at Hoboken. Here they transferred to the transport Manchuria, and sailed for France two days later.

Reaching Brest, September 21st, they marched about three miles to a "Rest Camp," where they were quartered in shelter tents. The erection of temporary barracks was commenced near Pontanzan Barracks, which work con-

tinued until September 29th, when the company was entrained for Abainville (Meuse).

Gondrecourt was reached the morning of October 2nd; detraining, they marched to Abainville, and at noon boarded the Light Railway, arriving at Mauvage about the middle of the afternoon. Billets were provided by the "Major de Cantonment." Ten days later the company was detached from the battalion and returned to Abainville, where they commenced the excavating and grading for the railroad yards.

On October 19, 1918, Company M left Abainville for Sorey, moving in two special trains over the Light Railway. En route the company stopped at Mauvage and

picked up the Medical Detachment, arriving at Sorey at 3:35 P. M. the same date. The men were quartered in "pup tents" for several days until the barracks occupied by the 12th Engineers were vacated.

On the following day they were classified according to vocation, and began work at their various trades in the shops and on the narrow gauge railway. The shops were not taken over at once by Company M, but gradually the entire railway and shop work was assumed by them, and they also supplied eight or nine complete crews which were used in the operation of the railway. About one-half the company was scattered along the various lines of light railway in that sector, detachments being stationed at Bar le Duc, Commercy, Mont Sec, Toul, Naney, Verdun, La Reine, Boucq, Neuf Etang, Neuf Etang Junction, Leonville, Cornieville, Trondes, Nauginsard and Xivray. The detachment stationed at Commercy, consisting of fifty-two men, assisted in the operation of the standard gauge railway from Commercy to Woinville; ten of the men in this detachment were transferred to Woinville, from which point they worked, but Commercy remained the headquarters of the detachment. On the 25th of October the men were moved into the barracks vacated by the 12th Engineers. On October 28th Company K and Headquarters Company arrived at Sorey, and along with them came Captain Chase B. Cotton, who assumed command of the company.

The period from October 15th until the signing of the Armistice on November 11th was a very busy one owing to the fact that ammunition and soldiers were being rushed over the lines to the front.

Work slowed up considerably after the Armistice, though rations were still moved up. Many of the ammunition dumps were emptied and the ammunition trans-

ferred to standard gauge cars and the hauling of salvage represented a large part of the work. On December 5th the battalion received orders to proceed to Conflans on Saturday, December 7th, via the Light Railway. The company left Sorey at 7 A. M. on that date in two sections, and on the trip to Droitaumont, the end of the Light Railway, passed over the section held by the Germans for several years, arriving there at 6 P. M. and camping there for the night. The following day the organization marched to Conflans, a distance of about four kilometers, at which place Companies L and M entrained on the broad gauge French railway, Company M going to Audun-le-Roman, Company L to Pierpont. At Audun-le-Roman the company was billeted in the few houses left intact. It had been one of the first cities of France to suffer the devastation wrought by the war. The entire place save the railroad station and other buildings which the Germans deemed would be of service to themselves, having been razed to the ground, or else rendered totally unfit for occupancy. Quite a large railroad yard was located at this place, but Company M did but little operating, being engaged during the ten days it remained there in police work along the right-of-way and around the billets. Captain Cotton remained at Conflans as Master Mechanic of the Conflans Division.

On December 18th the company returned to Conflans. There they located in barracks at Labry in an old French army post. The quarters were very comfortable and with very little work the company soon established a home. An army bakery, located in the camp, supplied us with fresh bread and it was relished by all. Drill or detail became the established daily routine, and at this time we are awaiting the next move, which we hope will be in the direction of home.



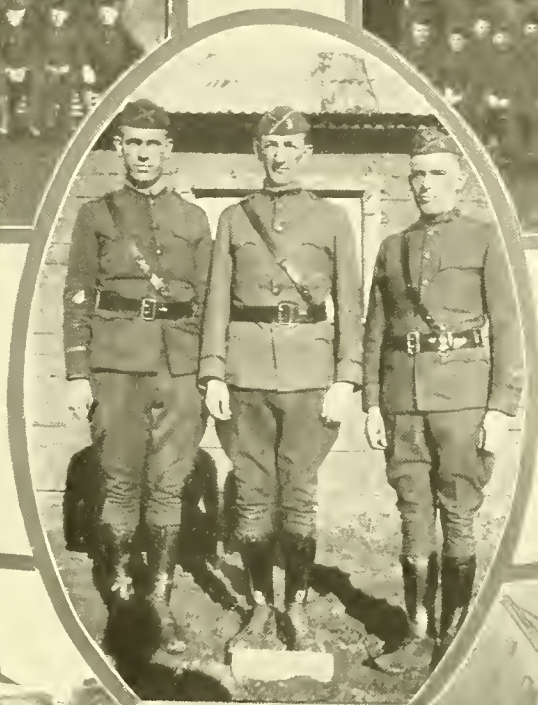




*Co. N.*

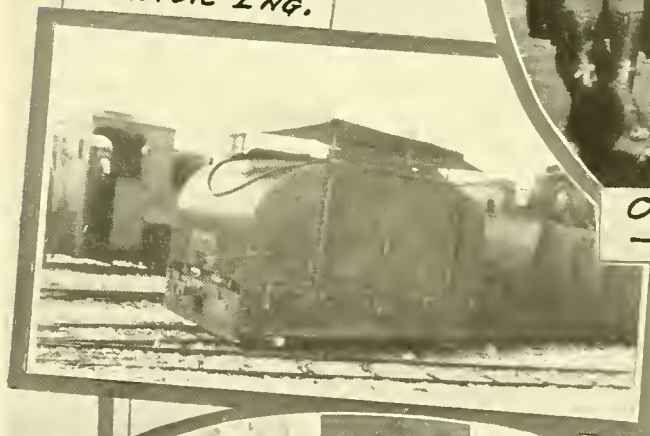


*Co. N.*

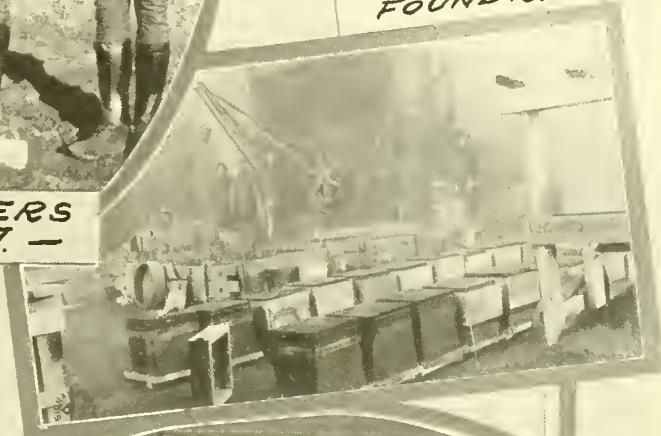


*OFFICERS  
- Co. N. -*

*BRITISH SIMPLEX  
TRACTOR ENG.*



*INTERIOR OF  
FOUNDRY.*



*Co. N.*



*Co. N.*

## History of Company N

Company N of the 21st Engineers was organized July 5, 1918. Camp A. A. Humphreys, Va., being designated for mobilization. On July 12th, Capt. John A. Cannon was assigned as commanding officer, relieving Capt. T. D. Sterling. First Lieuts. Bruckman and McClure were assigned July 15th, Second Lieut. Soderstrom, July 11th, followed July 18th by Second Lieuts. Smith and Anderson, completing the personnel of the company's commissioned officers.

The first enlisted men to be assigned to the organization arrived at camp July 9th and were quartered in tents along the historic Potomac. Then started the process of making a smooth running military machine from the willing, but untrained, rookies, and in a surprisingly short time most of the obstacles were overcome, and the company executed squads right and other various movements of infantry drill perfectly, not, however, without double time and extra fatigue duty being handed out to delin-

quents. Fifty rifles were issued to as many men and instructions given in the manual of arms. The rifle platoon soon attained a proficiency unexcelled by any company in camp.

What promised at first to be a stay of two or three weeks lengthened into one of nearly eight weeks. The heat was intense, the temperature being well over 100 degrees practically all the time. Six to eight hours of drill a day, together with hikes and swimming, soon put the company in perfect condition. Piece by piece, overseas equipment was handed out by the men in charge, and with each issue a new edition of dope spread over the camp like wildfire. Dame Rumor had Company N going to Italy when light underwear was issued, and to Russia when overcoats were handed out. No one will forget the coming of little Bevo, the dog wonder, who speedily became the mascot of the company and the pet of every one.

August 28th orders came, the company marched to the station and entrained for Hoboken. At first the destination was thought to be Camp Merritt, but going aboard was a welcome surprise. The Great Northern, a former Pacific Coast liner, with about 4,500 men aboard, including Company N, left port August 31st convoyed by destroyers and accompanied by the transports Leviathan and Northern Pacific. The voyage was filled with new experiences for almost all the men. Boat drills and mess calls kept everyone moving. Seasickness was much in evidence, and some of the men achieved the record of being sick during the entire trip. Late in the afternoon of September 7th land was sighted, but alas, Company N had yet before it a hard task before setting foot on the soil of France. Details to unload the boats were made up and sent below in four hour shifts. On the following day the company landed at Brest and marched out to a rest camp, where midnight details were the prevailing forms of rest. Crowded in an old Louis XIV stone barracks with a concrete floor for a bed, Company N stock fell considerably below par. Rain with its inevitable companion mud was always in evidence.

After a stay at Pontanezen barracks of ten days the company left September 18th for the scene of the present location, the Engineers' Camp at Abainville (Meuse). The journey of five days and four nights was anything but

comfortable. Sleeping in box cars with head and feet mixed, and living on "Corned Willie" and beans, did not serve to strengthen bonds of friendship, or to lay the foundation of a society for purifying the English language. It was far from being a pink tea affair. Thanks to the Red Cross and Corned Willie life was maintained, and late in the afternoon of September 22nd Company N left the train at Gondrecourt and marched to Abainville.

Barracks in an incomplete condition were occupied at once. The following day the company was assigned to the shops and various divisions of railroad work. At that time the war was in full progress and there was plenty of work, ten hours per day being the schedule. The Central Shops of the Light Railways were located at Abainville and the men were put to work assembling cars, locomotives and tractors.

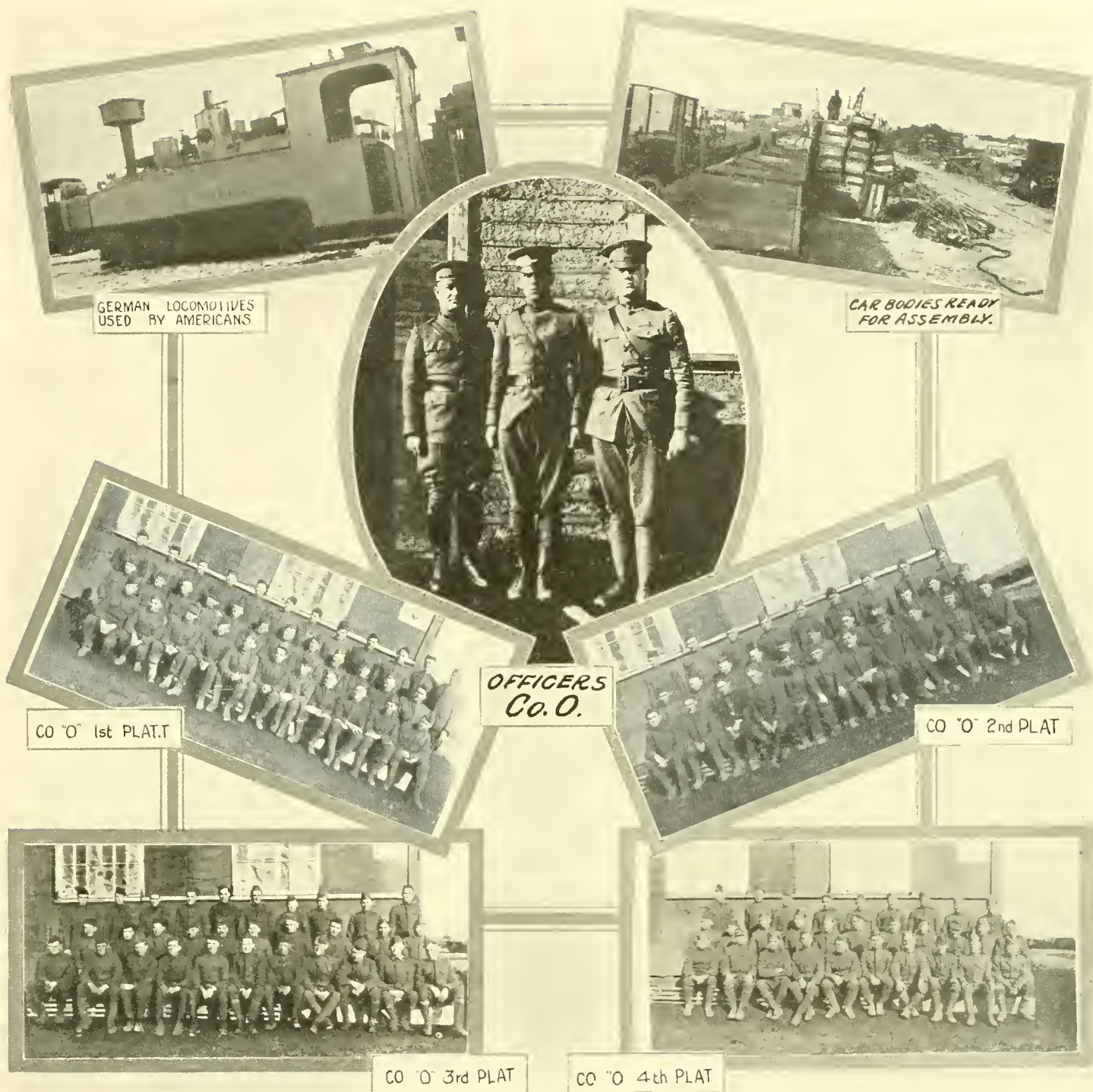
September 26th Company N suffered its first casualty, First Lieut. McClure dying in the hospital at Neufchateau. His death was sincerely deplored by the company, as he was very popular. The only enlisted man to die was Private Chillemi, who died late in January as a result of injuries sustained from falling into a pit of boiling water.

During the Argonne drive and up to the signing of the Armistice, work in the shops and on engines kept everyone going to the limit. Shortly after November 11th, the working day was reduced from ten to eight hours. Later Saturday afternoon was made a half holiday. During the long winter evenings entertainments were often furnished by the Y. M. C. A. and Salvation Army, and two basket ball leagues were formed.

During the winter months work in the shops decreased and several men were released for other work, such as headquarters orderlies, canteen clerks, military police, and ration details. "Going home" furnished data for the evening conversations around the stoves in the various barracks, interspersed with reminiscences, original wit and tales of adventure. Company N was one of the most orderly and best appearing in camp and a credit to the regiment, camp and country, and when the company disbanded it will be with a sense of completed duty and achievement of something really worth while.







## History of Company O

Company O might be aptly termed the rear guard of the 21st Engineers. Organizing began at Fort Benjamin Harrison, September 25, 1918, under the supervision of First Lieut. Charles D. Darragh, commander, and Second Lieut. George E. Mellow, supply officer. It was no small undertaking that these officers faced, considering the fact that headquarters consisted of a bare orderly room, and it was necessary to borrow a typewriter and stationery to make the first roster and report.

One of the first things accomplished was to appoint the non-commissioned officers. New men who had been wearing stripes and acting as non-coms. in the provisionals came in for consideration and a staff was finally appointed. Then began the work of providing the company with new O. D.'s and other overseas equipment. Trying to fit out 250 men when they could at best fit about one-half that number was a trying ordeal, and it is no reflection on the supply officer when the statement is made

that the only things that fitted most of the men were their pack carriers and cartridge belts. But, after much trading among themselves, they presented a creditable appearance.

Drilling came next, and after some strenuous days on the field they could hold a company front that was envied by the other overseas organizations then in training at Fort Harrison.

We will all probably remember the gas training. Company O had the reputation of being the first organization to go through the gas chamber without anyone being overcome. Tear gas was the most trying. The last platoon to go through was composed chiefly of non-coms., so they were given an extra portion, and as they emerged from the chamber coughing, sneezing and tearful, the remainder of the company appreciated more fully the old adage about the party who laughs last. Then the flu struck Fort Benjamin Harrison and the victims in Company O went to the hospital in a steady stream. First sailing orders were cancelled and the stay at the fort prolonged an additional two weeks. Only one member of the company succumbed, Private Adolphus J. Hopkins, dying October 16, 1918. His remains were sent to his mother, Mrs. Mary Hopkins, at Danielson, Connecticut. After three weeks of this epidemic the situation improved and on October 20th the packs were rolled and the company entrained, bidding a fond farewell to Fort Harrison. Just before leaving two officers were assigned to the company.

The trip to Camp Upton was greatly enjoyed by all the men, and the coffee, candy and cigarettes distributed by the Red Cross at the stations en route was ample recompense for the discomforts of that long ride in day coaches. The ferry trip from Weehawken to Long Island City proved interesting to those who had never seen New York City.

The stay at Camp Upton was short. There the equipping of the men was completed, the passenger list made out and the advance guard sent out. Long before reveille the company marched out of camp and entrained for port; arriving at pier 97, we marched on board the S. S. Maunganin and sailed from New York Harbor at 1 P. M. October 27, 1918.

The trip across the Atlantic was uneventful, the weather being remarkably pleasant and no submarines were sighted. For a day or two, as the convoy approached the Irish coast, we experienced some heavy seas. Those who were not seasick were either fortunate or experienced. The long voyage ended on the morning of November 8th as the convoy, surrounded by a fleet of destroyers, steamed into the harbor at Liverpool. November 9th the company debarked, and after marching about three miles to Walden Station entrained for Winchester. It was an

interesting trip, affording splendid views of the country. The ever-present Red Cross gave coffee and cakes to the men at several stations en route; arriving at Winchester, the company hiked to an American Rest Camp at Winnal Down, where three weeks were spent at various occupations and diversions. The organization was stationed here when the armistice was signed and the last chance to get into the big fight was gone.

The afternoon of November 14th a ceremony of decoration with the distinguished service medal took place on Morn Hill, after which all troops present passed in review before the commanding general of Base Section No. 3.

December 2nd the company entrained for Southampton, where the steamer St. George was boarded for Le Havre. Company O landed on French soil the following morning about 8 A. M. and marched out to a rest camp, where three days were spent in tents with mud all over the camp and sea gull eggs, cheese and light bread for mess handed out by benevolent Tommies.

On the morning of December 7th the company boarded a string of box cars for Gondrecourt (Meuse). It was a pleasant trip but most of the men had all of that pleasure they desired and were glad to unload and march to the engineers' camp at Abainville. In a few days the men were billeted in barns, and it was quite a relief when the company moved into more comfortable quarters. Here the company remained until the month of March was almost gone, when orders were received to proceed from Abainville (Meuse) to Montoir (Loire Inf.). On March 26th the company entrained at Abainville and departed on a journey that was to take them clear across France and happily toward the port of St. Nazaire. It was the first time in the history of the company that it had ever moved in any direction except away from the United States. The men were loaded in United States box cars, and with the exception of a few minor incidents, the trip was uneventful. On the morning of March 30th we unloaded in a drizzling rain and marched two miles to camp Montoir. As soon as the men had been given the necessary amount of time to get straightened out and rest up from the trip they were placed at work in the Engineer's Dept., and our officers and non-commissioned officers supervised the work. We received an addition to the commission personnel in the person of Second Lieut. R. P. Cordiner, who was attached for duty on our arrival.

Company O has no apology to offer for its work in the A. E. F., being either fortunate or unfortunate enough to arrive late for the Big Show and will consider itself included when the regimental commander shall say in speaking of the achievements of the 21st Engineers, as was said of the American fleet at the Battle of Santiago, "There was glory enough for all."





# History of Medical Detachment, 21st Engineers

The Medical Detachment (1st and 2nd Battalions) was assigned to the regiment on the twelfth of September, 1917, after having undergone two months of rigid training at Fort Harrison, Indiana, where it was a part of Provisional Instruction Company H, M. O. T. C.

Major J. B. Hastings, M. R. C., of Alton, Illinois, was assigned to the detachment as commanding officer and regimental surgeon on the eleventh of September, 1917, and with him Lieut. C. H. Bartling, M. R. C., as assistant surgeon. The enlisted personnel of the detachment consisted of one sergeant, two corporals, and twelve privates. After its arrival at Camp Grant, Illinois, and its assignment to the Twenty-first Engineers, Lieut. J. R. Ross, D. R. C., of Chicago, Illinois, was attached to the detachment, and later Doctor Clyde Unseitig, of Chicago, was assigned to the detachment as his assistant. The latter part of November Lieut. Bartling having obtained a transfer to Base Hospital when operating in Camp Grant, was succeeded by Lieut. C. L. Gifford, M. R. C., of Troy, New York, and from that time no further changes were made in the personnel of the detachment.

While in training camp, the mornings were taken up by drill, the afternoons were devoted to other branches of training, such as lectures, litter drills, and training in field work and first aid.

The lectures and studies treated were such subjects as Anatomy, Physiology, Materia Medica, Hygiene and First Aid, much time being spent on practical demonstrations of the latter.

The training in field work being of the greatest importance in this line of service, naturally was given the most attention, both by the instructors and by the students. It consisted of practice in Field Aid as rendered

these sick calls. This training gave the recruit a working idea of such delicate remedies as the "OD" pills, and of the universal panacea, Tincture of Iodine.

Upon the arrival of the detachment in Camp Grant and their subsequent assignment to the regiment, an infirmary was immediately established, and a new course of training was developed under Major Hastings' guidance, through which the members of the detachment soon became efficient in the practice of minor surgery, and the treatment of the less serious diseases then prevalent.

Work was also immediately started on the examination, inoculation and vaccination of recruits, and for over two months the much dreaded but harmless needle continued its work of immunization, the result being the utter absence of typhoid fever or smallpox in our regiment.

When our orders finally came through, and the regiment entrained for the East, a detachment of the Medical Detachment accompanied each section of the train, prepared to give such first aid and treatment as any emergency might require, and upon the arrival of the regiment at Camp Merritt, New Jersey, the infirmary was again established and final physical examinations and transfers made of such men who were not physically fit for embarkation.

The establishment of a regimental infirmary being impractical aboard a transport, all our supplies were stowed below and sick call held in the different compartments. "Abandon ship" drills permitting, it was held at ten o'clock each morning. Lieut. Gifford presided over the sick call for Compartment C, which was composed of the three decks in the prow of the boat.

All supplies were drawn from the ship's stores, and at the set time he would go below accompanied by an assistant, who usually carried a bottle of "salts" under one arm, and a bag of pill bottles under the other, station himself at the foot of the hatch just below the mess hall, and rocking up and down as on a gigantic "see-saw," the line would form and the pills dispensed.

The Sick Bay, as the ship's hospital is called, occupied the entire Deck A, and was large enough to accommodate fifty patients. It was here that all hospital patients were cared for during the voyage.

There is little to be said of the activities of the Medical Detachment during the Period in the S. O. S., outside of the fact that it was in the S. O. S. that someone handed us a "Flivver" ambulance, which has proven itself characteristic in every respect to its species.

Upon the arrival of the regiment on the St. Mihiel sector, the Medical Infirmary was established at Sorey Gare. For the service of such organizations along our railway lines that could not be reached by an ambulance, our regiment equipped several cars to serve as a hospital train, and ran it whenever necessary between the front and the Evacuation Hospital at Sorey Gare. The Dental Infirmary being more compact and portable, was moved from one company to another instead of having a permanent location.



*Medics, 21st Engineers*

on the battlefield, the scene of the training being a series of trenches of which this camp at that time was the proud possessor.

Each day a different detail was put on duty for dispensary work and general assistance in holding sick call, under the instruction of officers of the camp who held

During the latter part of July and the first two weeks of August, 1918, the influenza epidemic raged in our Regiment. It was necessary during this period to evacuate quite a few of the boys to the hospitals around Toul, but the majority of those sick confined their illness to a slight "three day fever," and soon recovered. We had no deaths in our regiment during the epidemic.

With every detachment sent out on service from our regiment there was assigned a detachment of Medical Corpsmen, who with combat equipment, accompanied the details and remained with them on whatever job was being accomplished. It was the duty of these men in case of emergency to give first aid and effect removal of patients to the rear.

It was during the St. Mihiel and Argonne drive where working parties were often under shell fire that their services proved most valuable.

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### HISTORY OF MEDICAL DETACHMENT, 3RD BATTALION

The enlisted personnel of the Medical Detachment, 3rd Battalion, was assigned from the Post Hospital at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind. On August 22nd, 1918, they boarded a special train and conveyed their cargo of C. C. pills to Camp Merritt. Remaining there long enough to receive overseas equipment they followed the 3rd Battalion on board the English Transport Belgie, and sailed the next day for the big fuss.

Among the various organizations on the transport was a base hospital unit. This made the Medics' task comparatively easy, as all sick men reported to the temporary hospital established by the base unit.

Landing at Liverpool, England, they spent the night at Knotty Ash Rest Camp, returning to the station next day for their trip to Southampton. This city being a seaport the next move was on the water, speeding across the English Channel on the S. S. Yale. They arrived at the port of Le Havre, France.

After several stops followed by rest camps, the stretcher bearers arrived at Abainville, taking abode in one of the barracks. They established an infirmary as camouflage for a C. C. machine gun and the troops were bombarded with pills.

Four of their number were sent on October 4th to Hatton Chattel for special duty with H Company. An officer and one man were sent to Hatton Chattel on October 12th, to assist with the special duties incidental to the company, and later they returned to Mauvages near Abainville.

November 9th, the Medics proceeded with Company I, and Battalion Headquarters up the Sioxaute to a small camp designated as Eix. This little station was the scene of their rejoicing two days later when the armistice was signed. Moving again by truck to a point near Verdun they participated in establishing a camp on a neighboring hillside about a mile from the West Portal of the Tunnel de Travannes. It was here that the men of the detachment found an occasion to call forth all their medical skill for first aid to the wounded. About a dozen men from Company H, while sitting around a fire in a shell hole one frosty morning, were injured by the explosion of a buried "Dud" under the fire. Some were quite seriously injured and one died later. When Company H moved on November 15th, to the village of Abre-

court near Conflans, two of the detachment accompanied them to administer medical attention and dispense pills. Two days later, the detachment with Company I, moved to the West Portal of the Tunnel de Travannes and established camp on a hillside near there.

Playing in usual army luck, they were ordered to move on Thanksgiving day and were on the train when the bugle blew noon mess. At 6:30 P. M. that day they arrived at Conflans, Meurthe-et-Moselle, France, and went into billets.

After living in comfort for several months they were ordered to Labry where the regiment was mobilizing. There the Detachment was left without a head, the Commanding Officer having received his discharge from the Army, returned to the States, and one lieutenant and one sergeant leaving for Paris to attend the University, and so without an officer, they travelled to the Embarkation Center at Le Mans, where a captain of the Medical Corps was assigned to take charge of the Detachment.

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### HISTORY OF MEDICAL DETACHMENT OF THE FOURTH BATTALION OF THE TWENTY- FIRST ENGINEERS

It was the second week of August during those sultry days while Fort Benjamin Harrison was organizing troops and whipping them into shape at full strength, when one Sunday afternoon an emergency call came to organize a Medical detachment for the Fourth Battalion of the Twenty-first Engineers. The detachment was organized under the direction of Lieutenant Frank H. Deane and Lieutenant George B. Hunt, and established our place of business at the extreme western end of Fort Harrison. Our small wooden structure soon became one of the few places of interest, as it was here we were given the nomenclature of "Pill Pushers." Hard drilling was one form of recreation which we received in addition to the lectures on hygiene, sanitation and first aid to the injured.

As a detachment with the Fourth Battalion, we shared their joys and sorrows alike. On the eighth of September we left Hoboken and after thirteen days at high sea which were filled with thrills and excitement, we



*Medics, 21st Engineers*

landed at Brest, a place of tender remembrance. In another week we were on our way experiencing the wonders of a new railway system: our journey coming to an end one cold night when side-tracked at a place from which, through the darkness, many flaring reflections of the skyline and a constant booming proved us to be somewhere



near the battle-front. We were stationed along the famous "Slim gauge" railway which operated from Abainville to the front line.

On October 12th, the detachment was split, one part remaining as the Medical Corps while the rest organized into a detachment with Lieutenant Hunt as Sanitary Officer. Owing to the fact that all of the French Doctors were serving at the front, we were constantly called upon by the civilian population for help, which was gladly rendered.

To the Yanks the narrow streets of these French

towns seemed to be back-side around, being the alley instead, where all waste from the barn and kitchen alike were evacuated. So the Sanitary Detachment always found plenty of employment supervising the clearing of roads and yards to insure the health of our men who were unaccustomed to such places.

After the signing of the armistice the Regiment was mobilized at Labry. Our duties here did not last long as one evening with packs slung the Medics, silhouetted on the Labry hill against a cloudy sky, disappeared to the order of "Squads West."

## History of the Band

Lieutenant Spurr

Born: December 2, 1917.

Place of Birth: Room on your left, upstairs Headquarters Company, Camp Grant, Rockford, Ill.

Father: Lieutenant-Colonel Hiram J. Slifer.

Mother: Not known, probably Chaplain Morgan.

That in substance is the most reliable and important data on the band, made possible through the kindness of Mr. Wm. C. Gregg. The band was clothed by the Government, who likewise very kindly paid the salary of the musicians. It is entirely a voluntary organization, though repeated efforts have been made to have it authorized.

Its first public appearance with all twelve of its charter members took place December 7th, when with frozen fingers and lips green and chilled, they put over a "Get Away" for the Motor Detachment leaving for overseas service.

During the course of the following week the various companies enjoyed the efforts of the infant prodigy enough to shake out some coin and buy some stuff for the boys to play with and read and then due perhaps to the excitement of "going over," the Regiment gave a dance. The band and an impromptu orchestra jazzed the blues away while the hob-nails clicked and the elite of Rockford tripped the light fantastic long after taps and taphouse hours.

On the trip over, they appeared between abandon ship drills and mess, consequently they did not have much time for practice; but they showed a willing spirit and an unconcern about the sad sea that was at once an inspiration and a pleasure. They even put over a very capable concert in the Officers' salon for the ship and army officers. Landing at Brest they toiled up the winding and winding (pronounced wind-ing) hills with full packs and blew themselves, much to the delight of the Bretonians, though at the expense of their own personal comfort.

The Band went to Gievres and with much difficulty found places to practice in such places as quarters, or on tie piles, or out back of latrines. They were called upon for all sorts of execution varying from concerts to dances and funerals. They once played at a funeral with but nine pieces in the band and on another occasion with all twelve members present played "Nearer My God To Thee" for thirty minutes, while they widened the earthly berth

of a poor American who was the subject of the funeral. The suspense between Heaven and Hell was almost killing to the band. But not all their appearances were at funerals or in back of latrines, as the surrounding country furnished good concert places in its many cafes and the cafes furnished the material for good concerts.

By this time the band had grown to 28 pieces. Not that more musicians had been found but the band-leader, Sergeant LaCronne and others got busy and made some, and while the finishing touches were being put on the embryo musicians, Headquarters moved to Sorey.

Arriving at Sorey the war broke out and the band broke in on lines of endeavor that not even the alluring posters of "Join the Army and Learn a Trade" had apprised them of. They were put on detached service from music and assigned to various details to play their part in winning the war. Ole Hanson was placed in charge of the rear, that is to say he was sanitary "Chef de Service," a strictly honorable position and not a mode of punishment. Dutch Otto did K. P. So did Frank Schropp. Barney Sicklick helped make garden. Morton was an orderly; Hausaur was a dog-robber. Oh, they did everything from K. P. up to Sergeant Majors. They may not have leaned against a barrage or built them, but they at least maintained the bulwark of civilization, the mess halls and the latrines, and when their daily work was done they dug up their horns and played just for fun.

Four nights a week they practiced, they say,

And played concerts for you and me each Sunday.

That's rotten poetry, but no matter how rotten the poetry it could not express or explain the trials and tribulations that the band went through to maintain itself as an organization, and live up to the hopes of its father and benefactor, Colonel Slifer, who always maintained a hearty interest in the band and gave it his steady support. While at Sorey they played concerts in Void, Commercy, and Vaucouleurs, appearing at all public and festive occasions such as the Fourth of July, and July 14th. They played for a dance with an impromptu orchestra of nine pieces whose music consisted of two pieces of piano and mandolin music and got away with it. They played at a citation exercise for the French at Void on fifteen minutes' notice. Really we have not the space to chronicle the miracles of music that they put over. If

we were to catalogue the various activities of the band it would look more like an officer's qualification card than a history, and this must look like a history. They orchestrated the music for that famous 21st Engineers Minstrel. They played any place, anywhere, any time, any how, any way. But music did not come to them as though they lived just off Broadway and if they repeated on their programs, or showed a tendency at odd moments to stray from the music as it was written, charge that up to a desire to please and give variety.

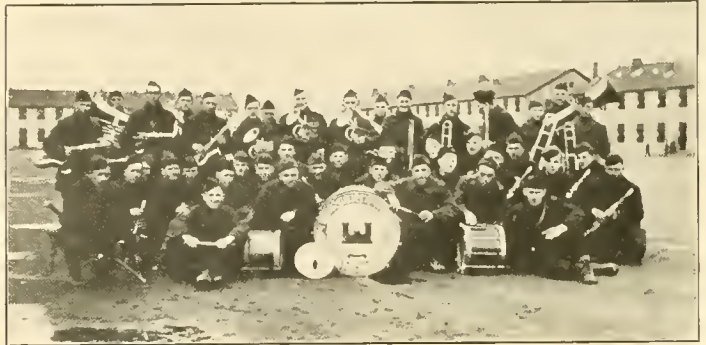
It was while the Regimental Headquarters were at Sorey that difficulty was experienced in getting the officers up in time for breakfast. Some fertile brain conceived the original idea of a fife and drum corps, and the band as the custodian of the musical destiny of the Regiment were selected to perpetrate the fife and drum corps. Perpetrate is a well chosen word; it is suggestive of so much in the line of criminology, and certainly that fife and drum corps was criminal. The band objected to the fife and drum corps, the officers objected to the fife and drum corps, the enlisted men objected to the fife and drum corps, but it served its purpose. After listening to that fife and drum corps for two minutes, no true soldier could lay inactive, and by the time they awakened and were moved to vengeance, the fife and drum corps had made its escape. But in the meanwhile the entire camp had been awakened. It was a grand and glorious feeling for the band when the fife and drum corps was dissolved.

And then, after the St. Mihiel drive, when the Regiment moved to join the 1st Army in the Argonne, Headquarters went to Vraineourt, where, also, music was a minor activity of the band, though they did conspire with the band of the 11th Engineers to pass away some of the evenings in bursts of music. LaCronne was at this time top cutter of Headquarters Detachment and extra motorcycle driver. Tubby Marsh was a so-called Company Clerk. Bergquist was sent to Souilly as a key pounder. Leatherman was in charge of telephones. Roseberry was dog-robber for Colonel Slifer, Schropp got the D. S. C. (Drivers Street Cleaners), Cummings and Breckenridge got hogger's jobs during the Argonne drive. Wood rode courier. Each and every man in the band had some outside activity that kept him busy at all hours and it was only through a splendid "esprit de corps" that the band was held together at all.

On the night the armistice was signed it was deemed fit and proper that the occasion should be celebrated and the band forthwith lent its aid to the occasion. Some officious 2nd Louie took upon himself to interrupt the festivities, but came upon Colonel Slifer in his activities and received a dressing down such as only the best friend the band ever had could give. It well repaid the band for all its efforts to hear the "Old Man" give his well-deserved dressing down.

And then the Regiment moved to Conflans. The members of the band were still on their various duties as clerks, orderlies, couriers, K. P.'s, etc., but an order of Colonel Slifer's brought them together once more and a house with a commodious hay loft attached was set aside as band quarters. Lieutenant Spurr, of Company F, was detailed by a Regimental order to the position of acting band leader, despite the fact that he could not read a note. Through the kind cooperation of the Battalion Commanders of the 3rd and 4th Battalions, the best

musical talent of their respective organizations was offered to the band and in a short space of time it had grown to a total of forty-two pieces. Concerts were given each week "en farce la gare" at Conflans and two private cars were placed at the disposal of the band to carry them to Audun and Spincourt that they might play for the com-



*Regimental Band*

panies located at these points. The orchestra, under the leadership of Barny Sicklick, got its tune up and then began playing for officers and enlisted men's dances and assisting in the vaudevillian efforts of the Regiment.

The same difficulty which had been encountered at Sorey in awakening the officers also was again at Conflans. The war had broken out again and the 21st Engineers having gone back into the Army formations such as reveille and retreat began to appear on the daily time card. The idea occurred that probably the band in its full strength might be able to awaken the officers and men and so each morning they paraded around the quarters. It is some question as to whether their efforts were appreciated or if it was so understood that it was darn cold and dark in the morning, but before a full realization could take place, the practice was stopped, much to the delight of the band and the rest of the Regiment, as well.

The war continuing and our entrance into the Army becoming more and more serious, the Regiment moved to the Casern at Labry, where the band was quartered in a palatial barrack just outside the stockade from which it made its daily pilgrimage to the drills, formations, etc., known as Guard Mount, Battalion Parade and Retreat. Short concerts were interspersed at appropriate moments, and the Band gradually asserted itself as the backbone of the Regiment though still unauthorized.

Just what the future of the Band will be no one, not even G. H. Q., seems to know. But as a Regiment it is believed that we should give great credit to the voluntary efforts of the men who by their self sacrifice and intense interest have made the band not only a possibility, but a success; and the credit must be placed at the feet of the men themselves and in particular to the musical ability and leadership of Sergeant LaCronne, Tubby March, and Roseberry. Each man in the band has given his best and to each of them we owe our thanks. To Captain George E. Miville for his interest and support many thanks are due. But it is due to the memory of Lieutenant Colonel Slifer that the band, as an organization, looks with bowed heads and fervid thanks for the many helps, kindness and hearty support that he gave it. They have lost their best friend and father.



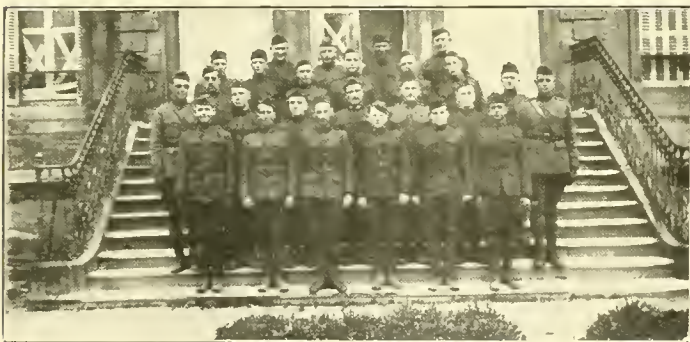
# The Shock Troops

(ENGINEERING AND SURVEY DETACHMENT)

By John C. Coyle

The surveyors, or "shock troops" as they later became known throughout the Regiment, occupied a very important place in the work of the 21st. Organized between February 28th and March 11th, 1918, to proceed with the surveys for the construction of the Sorey-Cornieville line, they grew into a sort of permanent corps of varying numbers. Orphaned, like the Regiment they were part of, disowned by every company, the bane of every supply sergeant in the outfit, never was a more hard boiled independent gang of "seeveyors" brought together; as capable of taking care of themselves no matter where, as they were of giving a high standard of engineering service. The construction companies were called on for surveyors and the following "original shockers" reported at Sorey: From Headquarters Company, Master Engineers Charley Henning and John L. Gressitt and Private Gustafson; from A Company, Privates Charlton, Gilbert, Corporals Glavin, Wm. H. Cooper, K. S. Cooper, Price, Lewis, Huddle, Duchac and Forbes; from B Company, Privates Oliphant, Coyle, Speck, Leisher and Livingstone. These were formed into several field parties and commenced work under the direction of Captains Brown and Pumphrey, and Engineers Henning and Gressitt. After about a two weeks' stay in Headquarters barracks, the "shockers" made their first move towards independence by removing themselves into squad tents which they had erected near the officers quarters along the canal. Here, when the arduous labors of the day were done they could spend the evenings in restful "bunk fatigue," listening maybe to the native sons explaining "why is a native son?" or to the boy-wonder of the Cumberland Valley "soixante," when he would give his stirring dramatic por-

the surveyors to move again, ten of the party being ordered to Cornieville and attached to Company B, leaving the "yard gang" of Price, Gus and Coyle with John L. to take care of the yard then under construction. It was here the "yard gang" brought into the ranks of the shockers that friend of all the "dog," and when on June 16th the gang returned from Cornieville, never was friend more sought after than that canine at Sorey yard. The field work having been pretty well pushed forward by this time, it was decided to start work on the "Stake Pile." It is freely admitted amongst the "shockers" that much of the success of the arduous work at the "stake pile" was due to the untiring energy and successful leadership of that noted runner and sturdy son of Tennessee, Cooper, K. S. It is also admitted that "Chris" was ably assisted in this by his friends and comrades in arms, "Dave" Huddle and Cooper, W. H. The friendship between "Dave" and "Chris" was "touching" at times and in later days when "Dave" in a French uniform attempted to storm Hill 37, single handed, almost receiving a citation, there was not a prouder man than "Ole Chris." Along towards the end of June, all work having been completed, it was thought the regiment would leave for the Luneville sector, and the shockers were ordered to be ready to go there. On July 1st, the first party comprising Engineer Gressitt, Price, Lewis and Coyle, started out for Baccarat and established themselves in the "Cristallerie" with F Company. The remainder of the shockers followed in a few days, their number increased by twenty-eight additional men from A Company. This was a great sector for the shockers and Baccarat a "bon" burg. Never once, did "Specky" or "Sarge Case" hear the sound of "finish biere."



21st Shock Troops, Labry, March 12

trayal in "one reel" of how he caught the minnow and "out-Isaaced" Iky Walton, or perhaps it would be the voice of "Stoneface Eddie" which would lull the gang to sleep, informing them how to pass inspections, only to be aroused in the morning by the excited voice of "Ollie" announcing "hot cakes for breakfast this morning, boys."

A few weeks of tent life, however, and it was up to

After a month or so "preliming" and "topogoin'" under Charley, John L. and Wad all over the landscape of the Muerthe and Moselle, work was stopped, turned over to the 12th Engineers and the shockers recalled to Sorey, traveling back in an A. E. F. ("chevaux 8, hommes 40") special. Back at Sorey and once more in squad tents, the shockers were allowed to rest up in waiting and in anticipation of the arduous task ahead of them in the drive on the St. Mihiel salient, which was known to be coming, and was expected any day. Three parties were organized for work in the drive, one to start from Remnaucville, one from Flirey, and one from La Reine Camp. The make up of the parties was as follows: Starting from Remnaucville—Lieut. Charley Henning, Corporal E. Glavin, Privates W. H. Cooper, D. Charleton, L. F. Gustafson, D. A. Leisher; starting from Flirey—Master Engineer E. L. Wadsworth, Corporal E. G. Forbes, Wagoner A. E. Esterberg, Privates H. D. Oliphant, A. E. Speck, O. E. Highfill; starting from La Reine Camp—Corporal H. J. Case, Privates J. P. Coyle, F. E. Bailey,

T. E. Wells, E. H. Baltz. Just before the start of the drive the parties were moved up to their respective starting points, and it was about this time that "Case" gave the surveyors their name, the "shock troops"—first in the regiment to start advancing and always staying in the lead.

As surveyors, their work during the drive was absolutely necessary and was a big factor in the rapid carrying out of the work allotted to the 21st in linking up with the German railroads. As men, they showed they were as capable physically as they were mentally, undaunted by hardships or shell fire. As an instance of their contempt for shell fire may be given the performance of shockers "Wad" and Gus at La Foïme. While making a survey near the ammunition dump there, the Boche dropped a few shells around and on the dump, and while the dump was going off, the gallant shockers never hurried their speeder away a bit more than seventy miles per hour.

The parties did not come through the drive scatheless, their ranks being thinned by the loss of "Ollie" and "Smithy," two of the B Company shockers going AWOL into Germany while out on reconnaissance work. Big "Esty" was also another "missing," having been drafted by Captain Pumphrey to navigate him over the mud holes in his motoreycle. However, "Esty" don't mind a little cussing any more than he does shell fire.

"Charley" Henning also got into the casualty list with the loss of a pillow, which happened to be only a coat. Charley said all coats looked alike to him in the dark anyway, but "Bill" got hard boiled about it. Poor Bill, if he had *only known*, he would have probably have said, "Certainly, Lieutenant, you can have my coat."

Their work in the salient finished, on October 2nd the shockers once more mobilized at Sorey and after a few days there again prepared to lead the way, this time in the drive between the Argonne and the Meuse. On October 10th they left for Vraincourt in the Argonne where they established headquarters, and themselves particularly, in the most comfortable billet to be found. Here they distinguished themselves by their interest in the well-being and comfort of their more delicate confreres in the Regimental Band, allowing them an occasional view of the stove and other comforts of the shockers.

There was little surveying for the shockers to do here, but as Engineer Scouts, while the battle line was being pushed forward towards Grand Pre and Romagne, they performed a service which was no mean contribution to the success of the Regiment in the preparations being made for the continuation of the drive beyond these points on November 1st.

One more notch was added to the reputation of the shockers during these days, when, while out on duty as a scout "Stoneface Eddie" carried out a masterly and record breaking retreat from Dannevaux—without a map.

During their periods of inactivity at Vraincourt, the repose of the shockers was occasionally disturbed when Jerry came over and unloaded, and one orderly retreat must be set down in the shocker's annals. Gilbert's inability to find space for his cot seriously interfered with the dignity of this now famous rout and only after his departure for Germany was the aisle freed.

With the approach of November 1st, Engineer scout parties were organized for work in the continuation of the drive on that date, and they were formed as follows: To

start from Grand Pre—Captain Brown, Corporal E. G. Forbes, Privates T. E. Wells, E. H. Baltz, F. E. Bailey, O. E. Highfill, A. E. Speck, K. S. Cooper; to start from Romagne—Captain Pumphrey, Corporal E. Glavin, Privates W. H. Cooper, D. Charlton, L. T. Gustafson, J. P. Coyle, C. R. Bentz, Wagoner A. E. Esterberg. These parties during this drive again gave a service of the greatest value to the Regiment. Hiking night and day, often under shell fire, using their eyes and brains, going without sleep or meals, the information sent in by the "shock troops" was once more a big factor in the success of the Regiment.

It was during this drive that the first prisoners credited to the Regiment were taken by "shockers" Coyle and Bentz. On November 1st, while following the advance in their line of duty, they got beyond the infantry and came on three or four of the Boche. No resistance being shown and after an attempt was made to question them, they were sent towards the rear. It is said, however, by other "shockers" that the Boche went back to the rear on stretchers and that the only reason why they couldn't compre "Hucks" Dutch was that they were too near dead to know they were still alive.

A few days after the signing of the armistice, the shock troops' labors were again finished.

A little later they gathered together again at Vraincourt to await the next move of the Regiment.

This was the turning point in the career of the shock troops and when the Regiment moved and Headquarters and the shockers were established in Conflans, the gang were free to enjoy that ease and comfort they had so long looked forward to. With reveille, a thing unknown to them, awakened only (some of them) by Elmer "Blatz" taking a "Kansas wash" or perhaps by Captain Radford awakening "Jailbird Smithy," who had rejoined us, to assist him, it was thought, in looking for some lost morning exercises, or a morning imitation by "Old Bill Bailey" of "Bluebeard," the shockers were up and ready to play with the "dog" another day, cheered when their thoughts would revert to the days of the war, a cup of "hot coffee," when nothing stronger could be located, or by a little talk on "Good Fellowship" by "Buzz," happy now that he had "little Hi" able to tuck himself in with a clean face and



*Shock Troops of 21st Surveyors, March 10*

all, or by "eyebrow" reminding us that he remembered when he used to wear a "tuxedo."

February 3rd marked the end of their valuable services as shockers no longer are absolute essentials, they were demobilized, some returning to their companies, a few being retained at Headquarters for occasional and various duties.





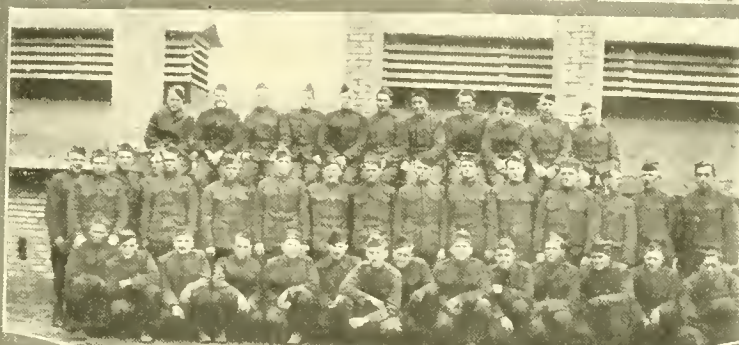
MOTOR DUMP  
21<sup>ST</sup> ENG.  
AT CONFLANS



MAJOR RYAN'S  
MOTOR CYCLE ORDERLY  
HOOT'S AT TOUL  
KARICOFF (LEFT)  
MEELROY (GOOGLES)



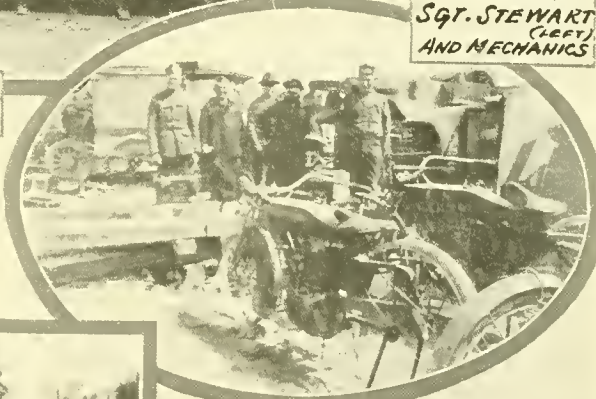
MEELROY  
KARICOFF  
SPEED  
MERCHANTS



OVERLAND  
TRIP FROM  
ST. NEZAIRE  
WITH  
MACK TRUCKS

MOTOR DUMP  
AT SORCY  
SGT. STEWART  
(LEFT)  
AND MECHANICS

MOTOR DETACH  
21<sup>ST</sup> ENG.



ARMY TRUCK  
IN TROUBLE  
AT SORCY.



T.B. CONELLY  
ON  
F.W.D. TRUCK



BOCHETROPHIES  
FROM  
ST. MIHIEL DRIVE



MOTOR PARK AT SORCY.



## History of Motor Detachment

The organization of the Motor Detachment with an equipment of 15 F. W. D. trucks, 4 Dodge touring cars and 26 motorcycles with side cars occurred in October, 1917, and on December 6th they were sent to Newport News to await embarkation orders.

It was on January 8th that the "Tiger" lifted anchor and with 850 heads of mules, horses and the Motor Detachment on board proceeded to New York for a supply of water and oil. At high noon January 12th they departed for France. The Tiger was one of a convoy of twenty ships when on the third day out, something went wrong with the rudder and they laid for 36 hours, losing the convoy. After a futile attempt to rejoin it, the skipper decided to take his ship through alone and headed for St. Nazaire by the most direct route.

The detachment busied themselves scrubbing the decks and dog-robbering for the mules and horses. In the Bay of Biscay, often referred to as the "Sailor's Graveyard," one evening before they arrived at St. Nazaire they were expecting something to happen any minute, when suddenly a pistol shot was heard at the bow, then the gun spoke. On the horizon the form of a ship was visible; three times the gun crew fired, then the distant ship answered the signal and then passed on the port side. Two of the shells had punctured her hull for her failure to promptly reply to the Tiger's signals.

Upon arriving at the Belle Isle, 3 A. M., January 25th, a French pilot took the ship up the river to the port of St. Nazaire. After two days in the port orders came to proceed to Bordeaux which was reached February 1st and two days later the detachment went ashore. The equipment however was not unloaded until two weeks later, the boys having ample time to explore the city. The trucks when unloaded, were towed to the motor transportation service park where they were inspected and numbered. This done they were moved to Camp Genicart and fitted with transport bodies. The touring cars and Dodge trucks were uncrated and assembled before being taken to the Service Park.

During the above operation Colonel Peek wired for touring cars and later for six trucks. Three touring cars in charge of Sergeant Anderson were sent to Nevers and a few days later Sergeant Fagan convoyed the trucks to the same place. The trip was made in a trifle over three days with only one mishap, a main drive shaft in the transmission of one of the trucks broke and it was necessary to leave this truck at Limoges for repairs.

The day following the arrival of the trucks at Nevers they moved Regimental Headquarters, including their equipment, to the train, and loaded it on the cars including the motor equipment, and the whole outfit moved to Sorey. Here the motor detachment were engaged in hauling barracks, telephone poles, stone and supplies of all kinds, driving in rain and mud.

The latter part of May they started hauling sand, gravel, cement and lumber for the French at Forts Girouville and Liouaille. This work was originally done in daylight but as the roads were under direct observation and

the Germans started to shell the roads, it was necessary to work under cover of darkness. Thirty trucks were engaged in this work, ten of which were furnished by the 23rd Engineers. The loading was done at Vertusey and Commercy from barges. The first trip each evening started from the canal at 7 P. M., arriving at Bonecourt about 8:30. Here they waited at the foot of the hill until 9:30 P. M., when it was quite dark, then continuing up the hill through a small woods where the French infantry had their headquarters in dug-outs, and out into the open between the infantry and artillery, almost at the skyline where they unloaded.

This work for the French was finished in August and preparations for the St. Mihiel offensive were started. Their part was principally the transportation of troops to the front. The traffic on the roads was extremely congested and as the day of the drive drew nearer the traffic increased until at night it was still a solid jam of truck trains of troops, supplies and ammunition, artillery, machine gun carts and marching doughboys, all struggling for a foothold on the dark roads.

After the St. Mihiel drive, in the latter part of September they moved the Regiment to the Meuse-Argonne Sector. Company A was moved first: fifteen trucks being used in charge of Wagoner Conelly. They proceeded from La Reine via Apremont, St. Mihiel and Verdun. Upon their arrival they found the French heavy artillery hard at it; the Germans replying rather weakly. A stop was made at Verdun for a few hours sleep, continuing at daylight through Dombasle, Vraincourt, Neuville and across what only a few days before had been "No Man's Land" to Varennes. The roads in this region were almost impassible, one shell hole after another. Darkness caught them between Cheppy and Malancourt. Continuing for a while some of the trucks got stuck in the mud while others went astray on wrong roads. A stop was made here for sleep, the drivers sleeping upon the truck seats.

After unloading A Company at Malancourt they went back to pull the trucks out of the mud and shell holes. Just as they were about to leave, a German plane came over after four observation balloons. He dived at the first one and got it, then at another. The balloons were being pulled down by this time, so he missed. He dived at it a second time and missed, all this time the balloon and plane were getting closer to the ground. The third attempt his bullets hit and the balloon went up in smoke. Now the plane was real low and he turned his attention to the truck train, taking one dive at them with his machine gun open. He hardly started when they were wallowing in the mud under the trucks which was about knee deep. The anti-aircraft made it pretty hot for him so he beat a hasty retreat to his fatherland, with several allied planes close on his trail. Of course they did not run from the Boche—hell, no, they got under the trucks to avoid being hit by anti-aircraft fragments which fell pretty thick around them.

Arriving back at Sorey late in the evening of the



fourth day, they repeated these trips until the whole regiment was moved and securely planted in the Meuse-Argonne. They were often out for a week at a time sleeping on the trucks and eating wherever possible. I doubt if they ever missed a meal, though it is probable that many were postponed.

After hauling troops one night to Buzaney, which had been evacuated by the Germans the day previous, they were returning to Grand Pre and endeavoring to get there before dark on a badly shell-torn, congested road. However, darkness overtook them. Nearing Grand Pre the searchlights were looking for a Boche plane. Not much attention was paid to this commonplace occurrence until a touring car with its lights on passed them. The enemy plane was probably looking for this, as he immediately dropped three bombs directly upon the road a short distance ahead. The Motor Detachment at once took another mud bath under the trucks and alongside the road. The bombs wrecked the touring car and two trucks in the train ahead of them. After clearing the road they arrived at Grand Pre about midnight.

On return trips from the front it was usual to carry back prisoners, refugees and the slightly wounded, thereby eliminating the uselessness of running empty.

One one occasion a truck lost a front wheel bearing in a collision, between Boulny and Grand Pre. It was left on the roadside until another bearing could be brought from Dombasle. Dixon, Hamilton and Coffman went out to make the repairs. It being night and too dark to work with facility, a few candles were lighted and work started on the new bearing. They were at work a short time when "Fritz" sent over a shell which landed too close for comfort. They made for a dug-out with the wheel, deciding to put the bearings on there. Just as they were entering the dug-out another shell hit the mud nearby with a dull thud and they probably owe their present good health to the fact that it was a "dud."

The armistice was signed, but that did not relieve the Motor Squad. Their work continued, gradually diminishing, until they were relieved at Conflans, Meurthe et Moselle; finally driving and turning in all the trucks at a Salvage Depot on the Regiment leaving Labry and moving to Le Mans. There the Motor Squad were disbanded and returned to their various companies.

## MOTORCYCLES

Twenty-six side cars and eight solos were set up and put into operation at Sorey Motor Park in February, under the supervision of Lee Epperson. The main difficulty at that time was breaking in men for this kind of work, owing to the fact that the 21st Engineers was composed mainly of railroaders. However, with a little practice, bronco-busters and hogsheds were soon running and repairing motorcycles like experts. A rough field was selected as a practice ground; each man was given a machine and started out over the field, one could hardly tell whether he was riding the motorcycle or vice versa. The shop was nothing more than a tarpaulin held up by two poles, which did no more than keep the rain off. Most of the side cars were assigned to the Companies, while the solos were held at Headquarters for courier work.

The repair work was heavy owing to poor condition of the roads, caused by the continuous rains. Tools were at a premium and there were no spare parts available. When parts were required it was necessary to repair or make

new ones and by the cooperation of the men they kept the cars going. Just previous to the St. Mihiel drive when the roads were congested they were kept very busy and found it very trying, as they were not permitted to use lights. As the motorcycles are small they were allowed to pass trucks, and touring cars and even to cross the fields when the roads were rendered impassable.

A dispatch rider upon receiving a message to be delivered is simply told to deliver it to Commanding Officer at ——— as soon as possible, that means P. D. Q. It matters not what time, where, or how congested the roads are, or what kind of weather, he must deliver it at once.

After moving to the Argonne they constructed an improvised shop out of boards and tin. Conditions here were much worse than at Sorey, and the mud was nearly knee deep, as it rained nearly every day. It was necessary to remove the mud guards and let the mud fly, the cars were also fitted with chains on both wheels. The roads were in a deplorable condition, owing to the heavy shelling they were subjected to and the heavy traffic.

The motorcycle was found to be the best and quickest way to deliver messages to the Front and with the untiring efforts of the shopmen they kept going until the signing of the armistice. At Conflans they still operated the "Veteran" cars until the Regiment migrated to Le Mans in March, when the cars were turned in.

## REGIMENTAL POST OFFICE

*By H. A. Glaves*

Our Regimental Headquarters building at Camp Grant, Illinois, marked the site of our first Regimental Postoffice. The mail was handled by a detail of three men. Here, while we were still rookies, we were permitted to receive packages of preferred dainties from home. Upon our arrival at Camp Merritt, New Jersey, Sergeant C. F. Alloway assumed charge of the post office. On Christmas Day the incoming mail swelled to such proportions that it necessitated the help of eighteen additional men.

Our first Regimental Post Office in France was located in one spare corner of the Y. M. C. A. building at Challevy and we received our mail in bulk through A. P. O. 708, Nevers.

The Regimental Post Office was established at Sorey and immediately after the completion of our Regimental Office a small room was allowed for that purpose. Alphabetically marked pigeon holes were devised and in conjunction with the large durable mail sacks this work was somewhat facilitated. Through the faithful efforts of our mail detail the system of distribution was advanced to a high degree of perfection. It was shortly after our arrival here that the Government put the ban on our receiving packages from home. This relieved the congested condition of mail considerably and lightened the burden of our mail department. A chute running from the outer entrance of the room to the slightly elevated roadway proved practical in transferring the mail from motor truck to the office. The mail was received at the railroad station and brought to the office by motor truck. Later, due to the increasing influx of troops in this vicinity, the corresponding increase of the mail business necessitated a change in the system. Accordingly, a building was constructed adjoining the station. A few additional men to the personnel were constantly occupied in this work. At this juncture the sergeant in charge was transferred to

the American Postal Service and A. P. O. 747 was inaugurated at Sorey. Mail for the 28th Engineers and the Quartermaster Department was handled through our office. Our extended stay in Sorey afforded ample time in which to perfect our system and the members of the mail detail became popular among the boys.

After our arrival in the Argonne Sector the A. P. O. was moved to Commercy and our portion of mail was conveyed by motor truck from that point to Vraincourt at which place our Regimental Post Office was established. Although this was for a brief period of time, our mail was apportioned with prompt regularity. During the busy season several members of the 21st Engineers volunteered to assist the regular force. When the heavy laden truck returned the mail was sorted and ready for distribution in a remarkably short time. The various companies of our regiment called for their mail by motor cycle courier. At this time mail reached us from the United States in approximately four weeks. Up to this time a rigid censorship was imposed upon our outgoing correspondence. Immediately after the relaxation of these restrictions we were at liberty to relate our experiences and furnish our friends at home with a verbal description of France and her people.

For a period of one month after the signing of the armistice we were billeted in Conflans and a spacious room in the railroad station was allotted to the post office. Here on many occasions the mail detail labored until long after bed time to please the inquiring correspondents.

While stationed at Labry, our mail was handled in a very appropriate building nearby the main entrance to the parade grounds.

In a final effort to mail all accumulated souvenirs home prior to our sailing, the mail room was invariable heaped full of boxes and bundles of various shapes and sizes.

During our brief stay at Le Mans, our mail orderlies took refuge in a squad tent and the time of delivery from the U. S. A. to France was curtailed to about fifteen days.

## A NIGHT IN THE ARGONNE

*Private L. A. Lunsford, Co. A*

The shells had been coming in all night, growing thicker as it neared daylight. It was the first of November and the last push of the Argonne drive. The little narrow gauge stretched away, winding through the hills and valleys; the grade seemed to be in pretty good shape, but about every other section of track had been blown away. It had to be repaired and it was up to us to do the work.

A detail was sent on ahead to smooth out the wrinkles where sections had disappeared. It was pretty hot around there all morning, but toward noon it seemed to get still warmer, both the weather and the shell fire. A plane was overhead, little puffs of snowy white floated high up where the "Archies" break, looking back along the line, the rest of the men seemed to have disappeared. We must have worked pretty hard and were far ahead of them. Continuing around the next curve, the noise of the shells screeching and bursting, we heard the sharp crack of machine gun fire and the sing of the bullets. We decided we had gone far enough.

There was a cut just ahead of us. We made for it and hugged the sheltered side of it. The German shell fire had been scattered but it seemed there in the cut that

they were bunching far too many around us. The corporal said: "Let's get out of here," grabbed his gun and started off. I said "Corporal, you're not going to leave me here alone." "I'm going somewhere where there is more protection," he said. This is about as a good place as any, I told him. Just then a big shell came in with a scattering



*The Regimental Post Office, Sorey Gare*

of dirt and he beat it down the grade. It seemed lonesome after he had gone. I could hear the shells coming with their peculiar screech, getting louder and louder as it came, and I'd wonder where each one would land. I heard one coming that I thought was going to be close—a deafening explosion—the bank I had been hugging seemed to pile right on top of me. It seemed as if the dirt and stones would never stop coming down. I had figured that shell right. It was no place for me so I started off down the grade to try and find the rest of the detail. Dodging from one cut to the next, lying flat on the ground half of the time, and finally reached some of our detail. Passing a doughboy on my way back, he stopped to speak to me but I couldn't answer him; my power of speech had disappeared.

## THE WIRE TAPPERS

*Bartlett Schilling, Co. D*

The following is the first incident of wire tapping that our linemen ran into. The telephone lines that leaves the L.R. at Cut Off Siding and runs through the wood to Boucq had evidently gone crazy. Every one was talking, the artillery were talking brokenly of a barrage, the balloon section of gas and observation, the French were screaming in strained voices and the 21st Engineers were all out of luck. We couldn't talk to any one without answering a lot of impertinent questions and then having a third party interrupting.

Trusty was sent out to locate the trouble and repair the malady affecting the line. About three-fourths of a mile back in the wood the top of a small sized tree had been cut down in a manner to foul all of the wires and short them. A little way above was found a camping place of two men. There was indications of American canned goods to have lasted for fully two weeks. As the line had not been patrolled the probabilities are when the parties had left they had done what was possible to delay communication.



# Notes on Light Railway Motive Power and Rolling Stock

The American Sixty Centimeter Motive Power consists of the following types:

Steam locomotives, 2-6-2 type, saturated steam, side tanks, weight 17 tons, total wheel base 15 feet, 7 inches, with a maximum height above rail 9 feet 3 inches, and maximum width of 6 feet 5 inches.

Gasoline locomotives, 4 wheel, 4 cylinders, water cooler type, 50 h.p., weight 7 tons, and a few of the same type but 35 h.p., weight 4 tons.

In the Toul Sector the steam power was used on the well constructed (usually) trunk lines operated from the railheads to the advanced ammunition, ration and engineer dumps. Traffic handled on these lines was very heavy and engine tonnage was rated and maintained as carefully as that of the standard gauge railways. The gasoline locomotives were usually operated under decidedly different conditions, their use being necessary on secondary lines of light construction or new track and they were especially designed for use on the advanced lines near the front, which were under enemy observation.

Due to the power and reliability of the steam engines, it was found advisable to use them wherever track conditions would permit, regardless of enemy observation, but where track conditions were poor the gasoline engines were of great service due to their lower center of gravity; outside frame and lower overall. The gas engines also rendered good switching service at and around battery positions and supply dumps. After the St. Mihiel salient had been reduced and new lines built to connect with the captured German railways, operation was greatly handicapped by poor track conditions. However, as fast as the track could be put in first-class condition, steam power was placed in service, and early in October steam engines were running regularly to Xivray and nearly to

gasoline engines were capable of an average day's work on one filling of gasoline, or 25 gallons.

While sections of track on the old Toul front were in plain view of the enemy and steam power was used regularly, very little shelling was experienced. The fact that their escape was not the lack of visibility was often proven by night-raiding parties into the enemy lines, who reported that our engines could be readily heard and located operating in the vicinity of such places as Naugin-sard, Edgewood, etc., and it would seem that the operation of steam engines close to the lines might have caused severe losses on a more active front.

On the Argonne-Meuse front the conditions were much harder on the power. The length of haul became so great and was increasing so rapidly that it became most difficult to furnish even running repairs. Engine water had to be taken mostly from shell holes and the lack of facilities for washing boilers, etc., brought the power down to a far poorer standard of general conditions than ever before. The rapid advance of the lines required operations over hastily repaired German track, and engines, both gas and steam, were operating over 20 miles from the nearest shop.

During the last month of the war the regiment employed three or four British 40 h.p. Simplex gasoline locomotives, which proved very serviceable, and compared favorably with the American gas engines. They proved to be simple in construction and operation, extremely powerful for their weight, and excellently suited for operation over rough track.

At various times a number of French steam and gas engines were loaned to the regiment. The steam engines were of four types, as follows:

The model 1888, doubled end 4-4 type, total wheel base 12 feet 16 inches, weight 15½ tons.

The Kerr-Stuart 0-6-0 type, total wheel base 4 feet 7 inches, weight 14 tons.

The Decauville 0-6-0 type, total wheel base 4 feet 7 inches, weight 11 tons.

Baldwin 0-6-0 type, total wheel base 5 feet 8 inches, weight 15½ tons.

The gasoline engines were the Schneider 0-6-0 type, water cooled, 4 speed, total wheel base 4 feet 8 inches, weight 11 tons. These engines, while they had their defects, proved conclusively that it would be possible to construct both steam and gasoline locomotives better suited to the requirements of the light railways than those we had, since trains could be handled over much poorer track with greater safety and speed. Lieut. Chandler states the five main faults of our present type 2-6-2 steam locomotives, as follows:

"1. The high center of gravity, which caused frequent upsets to the danger of the crew and inconvenience of the service.

2. The failure to negotiate curves easily, which was a great inconvenience to the operating department owing to the fact that they could not send them over certain lines where sharp curves and heavy business are present.



*Narrow Gauge Siding at Ammunition Dump near Abainville*

Thiaucourt, and a number were in service from Woinville to a point near St. Benoit and to Vigneulles, although gasoline engines were still in service between Xivray and Woinville. Under average conditions in the Toul Sector it was found advisable for the steam engines to take water every 15 kilometers and coal every 30 kilometers. The

3. The entire weight not being employed for adhesion, only 68.19% of the weight of the locomotives was available for traction purposes.

4. They are very conspicuous at night because of the sparks shooting high in the air and the light from the fire door and ash pan. In connection with the sparks, there have been several cases where camouflage on cars and guns, as well as fields and woods near ammunition dumps have been set on fire by sparks from the locomotives.

5. The great difficulty in making the engines steam with a low grade of coal.

There are several minor changes which could be made such as in the wedge bolts, grates, position of adjustment screw of brake rigging, the possibility of rocker grates, hole cut in rear of coal box opposite fire door to facilitate boring the flues now made difficult by front end arrangements, etc., which might be taken into consideration. The best engine from the mechanical point of view would be a double truck geared locomotive.

1. Because the possibility of a very low center of gravity.

2. Could negotiate curves easily; for example, the performance of the French Pechot locomotives on curves.

3. The weight being entirely on drivers, so causing the entire weight to be utilized for adhesions and tests have shown that a geared locomotive can pull 75 or 100 per cent. more than a side rod locomotive of the same weight on drivers.

4. As there would be but little jerking motion through the stack a Radley and Hunter smoke stack would practically prevent sparks leaving the stack if coal or wood was used as a fuel.

5. A large heating surface and grate area as compared with the tractive effort would give good steaming qualities with bad coal.

6. Such a locomotive, owing to the fact that there is no nosing motion, would be extremely easy on poorly ballasted or light track.

7. The design of such an engine would be greatly facilitated if crude oil or gasoline could be used as a fuel, as more steam can be produced in proportion to the size and weight of the driver."

## ROLLING STOCK

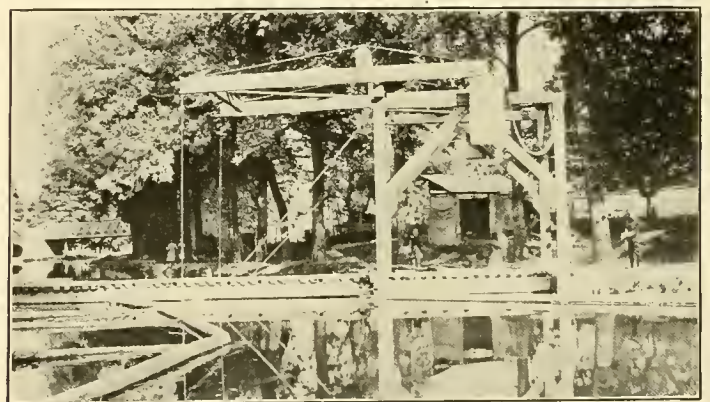
American light railway freight cars include: Box cars, inside height, 5 feet 8 inches; gondolas, sides 2 feet high, inside and flats. These cars all have a capacity of 22,000 pounds, inside length of 19 feet 10 inches; inside width 5 feet 5 inches, and weight 10,900 lbs., 9,000 lbs., and 8,000 lbs. respectively. Tank cars are 2,000 gallon capacity, weight 12,200 lbs., with same length and width as other equipment. The box cars proved somewhat unreliable for general use. They were top heavy, too rigid, and had a great tendency to turn over when derailed. The same may be said of tank cars when filled with water. The gondolas proved to be good, serviceable cars, as also were the flats. Several points about the American cars

can be legitimately criticised. In the gondola class the side door fastenings could have been improved upon greatly. The draw bars, which were of a British pattern, though much longer, had too much play, and this was the greatest contributory force towards breaking them while coupling the train, as too frequently it happened that the trainmen did not see to it that they matched properly before signaling to the engineer.

Another fault was that the draw bar head was not quite strong enough, having a tendency to break, causing trains to part, especially on severe grades. The wheels were good, yet had the flange been less tapered and a little deeper, derailments might have occurred less frequently. The cars had good brakes, but could have been improved had they been equipped with simple and standard brake handles. As a whole, the American rolling stock may be classed as very good, but possessing too much dead weight. The British had three general types of cars, the gondola, flat and tanks, although they had a few improved box cars. The cars were of an average length of 18 feet and were referred to as "D" and "E" types. They were of the double wooden truck variety, with drop sides, and have a capacity of ten tons. Owing to the narrowness of the wheel tread, cars frequently left the rail, especially on sharp curves. Another fruitful cause of derailment was their rigidity, which was not lessened by the fact that the coupler was attached to the truck instead of from the car body.

There was always considerable delay in repairing bad order cars on the road, unless the classified number was given, as the parts of the different types were not interchangeable; this emphasized the need of standardized equipment, which was observed in the construction of American equipment.

The French used a model 1888 steel "Artillery" or well flat car built especially for ammunition hauling, length 21 feet 10 inches, width 5 feet 5¾ inches, weight 7,671 pounds. The gondola was Decauville, manufactured



*Narrow Gauge Bridge Near V'oid*

length 18 feet 11 inches, width 4 feet 7 inches, weight 8,378 pounds. The French cars were well constructed and possessed good brakes. They also had draw bars attached to the trucks. They had mostly been in hard service and were not in first-class condition, many having sharp flanges, which frequently caused derailments.



## HOW COMPANY O WENT A. W. O. L.

The company was on the way to Abainville (Meuse) from Le Havre, and the train, which consisted of the usual cattle-car passenger coaches, pulled into Chaumont about dark on December 8, 1918. On inquiries, the Chef de Gare and various R. T. O.'s gave out the news that the train would leave there at 5 A. M. the following morning. It was ordered by the C. O. that the men must remain in or near the cars, and guards were posted around the train to enforce the order. Arrangements were made with the French Red Cross to use their kitchen for making coffee. We had the cooks and the coffee, and hence it was not long until the men were all being served with some real coffee—a beverage they had not had in three days—hence it was more than welcome. After the coffee was gone the guards had a hard job handling the men and keeping them from breaking through the lines.

The four officers (let us call them Lieuts. A, B, C and D), for various reasons, went downtown. They entered the officers' "Y," where Lieut. D settled for the evening in front of the big fireplace. Lieuts. A and B said they were going to a movie show. Lieut. C stayed at the "Y" for a while, then complained of a headache, and returned to the train. In the meantime the company was slipping through the guards, as companies sometimes *will do*, prowling around the yards and station, and making various little excursions. The movie show not proving very entertaining, Lieuts. A and B also returned to the train, just in time to find a "Frog" yardmaster running up and down the yards trying to load the men into the train. They had decided to hook it behind a freight that was going in the required direction, and not wait until morning. It was certainly a sight to behold—that poor bewildered Frenchman dancing up and down, trying to get the train loaded, but the men refused to do it on his order, probably because they did not understand him. The officers (Lieuts. A, B and C) soon straightened things out and put the men aboard. The train was made up with Company O attached to the rear end, and it pulled out at 9:55 P. M.

Ten minutes later Lieut. D. walked out in the yards and found himself companyless. Inquiring at the R. T. O. he received the reply that the train was scheduled to leave at 5 A. M. the next morning, and that the French Chef de Gare could locate the train in the yards. About this time three enlisted men made their appearance and asked rather sheepishly if the train was still in town. Then the Chef de Gare broke the awful news—that the train had just departed, and the four agreed they were S. O. L. and that the company had gone A. W. O. L. However, they were directed to get on a French passenger train going in the same direction, get off at St. Dizier, and wait for the rest of them.

At St. Dizier the lieutenant waited all night in the R. T. O.'s office, but no troop train came in. The three soldiers went to a rest camp near the station for the night.

The next morning the puzzle was solved—to get to the final destination the organization would turn out at Joinville, and not at St. Dizier, and then go over to Gondrecourt. The last detachment was redirected and started for Joinville, where they should have stopped off the night before, with instructions to go to Gondrecourt from there.

Arriving at Joinville, a train was just leaving the station, which the R. T. O. informed us was the last train for Gondrecourt until 5:50 P. M. It was then 8 A. M. Once more we were S. O. L.—forced to spend a whole day in a

little French village, with small chance of getting anything palatable to eat, and, of course, we had nothing to eat with us.

We got by though, and as all things have an ending, the day finally wore away, and the strays finally got the 5:50 and reached Gondrecourt after a tiresome, hungry trip, walked the 3 kilometers to Abainville, and recovered their lost company, but they had learned their lesson: not to trust French trains out of sight, or to get careless and let the company go A. W. O. L.

G. E. M.

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## COMPANY A LEAVES THE ARGONNE

During November Company A was stationed at Romagne. On the 25th orders came to move. It was a typical moving day, rainy and muddy. We struck our tents, loaded packs, stoves, tents and miscellaneous company supplies, including a German piano, on fourteen narrow gauge cars pulled by two steamers. The rails were wet and the coal slack, consequently, at all the heavy grades we had the pleasure of pushing our train. We left Romagne at 3:05 P. M. and with much difficulty completed the eight kilometers to Montfaucon by 5:40 P. M.

In one of our gondolas we had room to stretch a tarpaulin, and with a little dry wood started a fire. By changing seats every few minutes in order to be nearer the fire a dozen or more of the boys managed to keep dry. This caused much argument from the car behind as the smoke from the stove proved disagreeable, but an additional length of stove pipe finally soothed their feelings.

At Montfaucon we waited on a sidetrack for two hours while a new crew was being called. It was pitch dark and still raining. On investigating a bright light from a box car we discovered what proved to be a Y. M. C. A. on wheels. A mad rush was made for cigarettes and candy. About the time the boys were lined up in good numbers, one of our engines started shifting the car from track to track, notwithstanding the darkness. The fleet footed ones finally managed to purchase a few supplies, and enjoyed a cigar and a package of cookies for supper.

Leaving Montfaucon, we arrived at a switchback in the woods and spent an hour there during a heavy down-pour. After finally getting the block, we made Cheppy without further mishap at about 11 P. M. Here the orders were—everyone get packs and guns and line up along the train. Naturally these packs were on the bottom of every car, covered up with bunks, stoves, squad tents, kitchen supplies and other light articles. However, the formation was finally carried out in true military style.

One sergeant and the first three squads were ordered back on the cars in order to guard our train. The company was marched to a barracks and made themselves comfortable on the dirt floor. The train was pulled out and placed on a sidetrack at Cheppy Junction. Here we stayed Monday night, Tuesday and Tuesday night, sleeping on the cars or sitting up around a fire.

Tuesday morning it was necessary to eat. The guards in their search of the kitchen car found a real treat—oatmeal, and proceeded to prepare breakfast. This was very successful and many mess kits of oatmeal were devoured. However, one poor private was out of luck,

a handful of salt had been placed on a bench near the sugar, this private, in his mad rush to get seconds, used the salt in place of sugar. After eating a small portion of the oatmeal a strong argument was started between him and the cook. However, another can was salvaged and there proved to be plenty for all.

On Wednesday morning the cars were unloaded and the supplies transferred to trucks. After everything was set and we were ready to proceed, the order came for the third squad to remain and guard the balance of our belongings which we did not have room to load. This caused much grumbling from the third squad as their packs and guns had been loaded underneath those of the biggest portion of the first platoon. However, all succeeded in finding their packs and the trucks departed. A tent was put up in haste in the rain and we had another home.

Two of the boys took bicycles and went to Varennes on a purchasing expedition. They returned with cookies, cigarettes and chocolate from the Y. M. C. A. After much verbal and hand action, we talked a French pigeon outfit out of two canteens of vin rouge at five francs a canteen. After visiting three of the neighboring camps, another one of the fellows succeeded in procuring grease in order to fry potatoes. Supper was prepared and "French fried" were made until ten in the evening. Some good home-made fudge was then manufactured, and this evening was a great success, despite the disagreeable weather.

The next morning brought Thanksgiving Day. Our dinner was in preparation, when the trucks arrived to move us. Again we loaded up and were soon started for Audun-le-Roman. We reached Verdun at about one and stopped for ten minutes along the road in order to eat our Thanksgiving Dinner, which consisted of small cans of beans and a few cans of tomatoes. After this bountiful repast we started once more and by dark we arrived at Spincourt where we inquired the way. Here our Thanksgiving supper consisted of more cold beans, the supply of tomatoes had been exhausted.

By this time it was very dark and raining heavily—our trucks had no lights so we proceeded slowly. After about two hours travel we arrived at the village of Prentin. As no one seemed able to properly direct us, we decided to spend the night there in a German aviation camp, and fixed our beds on the floor frightened the rats into the corners and had a midnight lunch, which consisted of more beans.

The next morning we arose at an early hour, someone inquired as to what we would have for breakfast. This caused much laughter as beans were our sole stock in trade, and none of us believed in the "beanless days."

After the hearty breakfast, packs were rolled and we were soon on our way once more and we arrived at Audun without further mishap. We set about fixing up our new quarters, but, our troubles were not over. Some oatmeal which belonged to our officers was missing and the third squad was suspected. The sergeant in charge was called on the carpet and after a conversation with the captain brought the joyous news that the third squad would report for duty on the grade at once. After much grumbling the hours passed and recall finally sounded. Then we had the pleasure of fixing our quarters after hours. The journey was now complete and Company A established in its new home as befitted members of the 21st Engineers.

## A LUCKY CHANCE

*Bartlett Schilling, Co. D*

We had our first glimpse of the Boche Light Railway on September 16th. Two of our tractors were sent north of Montsec to salvage whatever L.R. equipment Fritz hadn't time to move when they retreated. They were entirely unfamiliar with the territory they were entering.

It was quite dark when they came to what later proved to be a round house and prison camp at St. Benoit. They struck camp for the night and started the work of concentrating the scattered equipment next morning. They had no idea where the front was but kept going thinking they would see indication of it before they had gone too far.

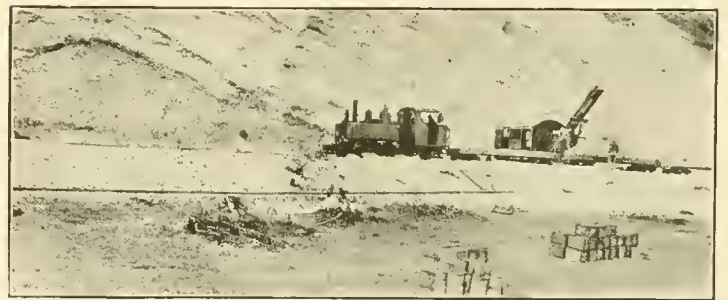
Coming to a large open field they saw in the distance two Boche box cars on a siding. Without hesitation they were coupled and started back with them.

One of these seemed to be particularly pro-German and jumped the track five times before getting back to the wood. An infantry Major stopped them and told them "Stay out of the open, I suppose you did not know that you were only a quarter of a mile from the front?"

At that point one was under observation for at least three miles before meeting a depression of any kind. However, they did not draw a solitary shot. An example of the good fortune we have had in our entire experience on the front.

## THE MOVE TO THE ARGONNE

At four o'clock the morning of October 8th Company D got aboard the six L.R. Trains and we started for the indefinite somewhere. The various detachments were called in, and despite the heavy rainfall it was like a reunion, for the company had not been together since the latter part of March. The track through what had been "No Man's Land" was very soft yet and the travel was slow. At Huedicourt a halt was made to wait for night before continuing the journey. The engines had tents covering over the cab and coal tank to cover the reflection of light from the firebox. We were compelled to walk from this point for about five miles. The engines slipped badly in making the ascent to Vigneulles, the sparks giving the Germans a wonderful opportunity for target practice.



*Quarrying Ballast Near Sorcy*

As we detrained at a point north of Heudicourt a shell was heard whistling close. Instinctively many of us dropped face down in the mud. I knew that perhaps half the company had never before heard a shell scream and glanced around to see what had been done by those members. There wasn't a form visible. It was satisfying to know that all had the presence of mind to drop. That proved to be the first of a series of mud baths. We were



near a cross road and evidently it wasn't included in the German plans that there should be any traffic along those roads. There was an attempt made to get the men into platoon formation. Every time we would get to the middle of the road another shell would announce its arrival and the scramble for the ditches on the roadside began very promptly. During one of our submerging exercises one of the boys cut himself on a piece of barbed wire or glass, thought he was wounded and sent out an S.O.S. for first aid. Another was shoved through the camouflage of the fence covering the road side. It was decided to get the men out of there while there were men to go. Little attention was paid to the formation. The shells came over at frequent intervals and we were kept busy mopping up more mud.

Just after passing through Vigneulles, the bunch were stumbling their way along, talking as usual. Some one heard a shell and yelled "Down quick." Everyone jumped to a ditch on either side of the road. One of the fellows had braced himself on the sides of the ditch to keep out of a puddle of water, when some one jumped on his head as the shell exploded about a hundred feet across the road. We had a monotonous trip with many stumbles and bruises. We finally arrived at an old frame building where we were picked up by tractors operated by men who said they were 21st Engineers, and taken to their camp to await the arrival of our own trains.

Seven of our fellows took the wrong road south of Vigneulles, turned to the right instead of the left. The farther they went the more action there seemed to be, and when rifles and machine guns could be heard popping, decided they had followed that road far enough. They were lost, and followed any old road that seemed to be taking them away from the rat-tat-tat of the machine guns and the screaming shells. At St. Mihiel they found a kind-hearted member of the Motor Transport Corps who was going to Verdun. He dropped them at Rampont as the first of our trains arrived.

Of our six trains, four of the engines ran out of water and had to be killed. The two which were able to make connection with the water car passed the others and picked up a car of water from the 15th Engineers at Vieville to fill and re-survive the four dead engines. At five o'clock the evening of the 9th of October, we all were in motion once more from Vieville.

Early in the afternoon on the day following we arrived at Rampont. The first train was run through to

Dombasle where a camp was made for the night and coal collected for the engines.

We detrained here and the morning of the 12th we loaded on trucks for Esnes. We made camp here for the night. A few crews were hauling rock and rations from Esnes to a point about four kilometers north. The limit of the track had been reached at that time. October 13th, four of our crews were detached and established camp at Adams and worked from the ration dumps of the 3rd, 32nd, and 84th Divisions to Esnes. A few days later, the French were relieved from Dombasle to Esnes and our Company Headquarters were established at the railhead there. As the Light Railway was connected with that of the Germans more crews came to help in the work of supplying the increasing number of divisions on the line near Montfaucon. We were very busy. The German track had not been sufficiently repaired to permit steam engines to pass over it. The tractors could handle only one car of canned goods and two of lighter rations. At one time we were supplying as many as four divisions from Dombasle to Montfaucon, a distance of thirty-one kilometers.

SHILLING, Co. D.

12 11

#### UNDER SHELL FIRE AT DEAD MAN'S CURVE

It was on the night of March 18th, 1918. Two American crews had been sent to Beaumont guided by French pilots, with a train of three cars each, loaded with ammunition. Just as the first train arrived at "Deadman's Curve" a Boche 77 struck a supply cart killing the two soldiers riding in it and scattered the wreckage over the track. The train crews went on up and cleaned up the debris and then ran the trains up and spotted their cars at the Beaumont dump.

Just as they commenced the work of unloading, the Boche sent in three high explosives and two gas shells, seriously wounding Engineer Broderick, who was assisted to the Beaumont dressing station by members of his crew. Before the work of unloading could be completed the dump was subjected to a bombardment of gas and shrapnel. The unloading was completed under shell fire and the members of crews were all at their posts when the trains left the dump. The bombardment continued until some time after the trains had left.

The French pilots were awarded the Croix de Guerre by their authorities.



# Citations Received by the 21st Engineers

## HEADQUARTERS 21ST REGIMENT ENGINEERS (LIGHT RAILWAY) AMERICAN EX- PEDITIONARY FORCES

May 27, 1918.

### BULLETIN

No. 27.

1. The following letter from the Commanding General, 26th Division, is hereby quoted for the benefit of all concerned:

## HEADQUARTERS, TWENTY-SIXTH DIVISION, AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

26 May, 1918.

FROM: Commanding General.

TO: Colonel E. D. Peek, Engineer Light Railways and Roads, 1st Army.

SUBJECT: Care of Railways and Roads.

1. The other day, coming from the advance trenches in my heavy limousine, I went over the Mandres-Boucq Road. I was astonished and pleased with what had been accomplished from the first day I had arrived here in turning that mire into a practical road. It promises by carrying on in a short while to be as good a macadam road as there is in the area.

2. I have noticed throughout the area your men on the railroad and on the roads working as individuals and as parties, and I have yet to see a loafer at his various tasks. If it is digging out a gutter, laying a rail, ballasting, levelling up, on a railway or a sprinkler, the men are carrying on and working hard.

The rule that is inspiring the men seems to be that which we pride ourselves in the 26th Division: Look out for the man in the mud.

3. You have planned well in the development and extension of your light Railroads and the work has been well done. It gives me pleasure to thus express my appreciation, and I request that you advise the various elements of your command of my pleasure and congratulations on the work accomplished.

(Signed) C. R. EDWARDS,  
Major General.

2. The Engineer of Light Railways and Roads takes great pleasure in being able to quote such a letter and desires to add his own appreciation to the faithful applica-

tion of the personnel under his Command on whatever work they may have been assigned; he takes advantage of the opportunity to add also a word of caution to the effect that these tasks are gigantic in their magnitude and are as yet just begun; he trusts that the same spirit and devotion to duty which has brought forth such favorable comment will be maintained unaltered and will be augmented in the future by even greater effort being exerted if such should be needed.

By order of Colonel Peek:

EARL W. EVANS,  
Captain, Engineers, R. C.,  
Executive Officer.

## HEADQUARTERS 21ST REGIMENT ENGINEERS (LIGHT RAILWAY), AMERICAN EX- PEDITIONARY FORCES

France, August 16, 1918.

### BULLETIN

No. 40.

1. The following letter from the Commanding General, 82nd Division, to the Chief Engineer, A. E. F., is quoted for the information of all concerned:

1. The Commanding General wishes to call your attention to the excellent service rendered by the Decauville of 60 c.m. railroad in the sector occupied by the 82nd Division North of Toul for over six weeks. The Division occupied approximately a 10-mile front and for a limited number of troops to hold such a sector Engineer facilities greatly increased the possibility of the troops.

2. The Railroad troops, under command of Colonel E. D. Peek, rendered excellent service and would, it is believed, have rendered considerable more had the Division stayed in the sector and more fully developed the use of the Decauville. It is a great saving on trucks and gasoline; also a great saving on the men who were saved physical exertion moving about, and were able to apply exertion in other more important work. It also made it possible for the men to move quickly during reliefs, where to camp men in unusual stations or move them about in daylight would attract enemy fire and suspicion.

3. Some 20,000 troops were moved in a recent relief much to the benefit of the troops. I believe Colonel



Peek and his Engineers deserve my congratulations on their excellent operation with their Railroad. I recommend extension of the service wherever the American troops are located."

2. It is with the utmost pleasure and satisfaction that the Regimental Commander learns, that through the efforts of the members of this Command the Light Railway of this sector has been able to render a service so highly appreciated by those whom we have served.

3. He desires to express to each and every officer and man of the Regiment his high appreciation of the untiring effort and spirit of loyalty, which alone have made possible the development of a service which is now so highly commended.

4. It is hoped that this same spirit may continue; in fact that the above letter may act as a stimulus to all to put forth renewed efforts; that the scope of Light Railway of this sector has been able to render a service so facilities may be used to their utmost capacity at all times for the greatest benefit of all concerned.

5. This Bulletin will be read to each Company and Detachment at its first Assembly after receipt of same.

By order of Colonel Peek:

P. S. LEWIS,  
1st Lieut. Engineers, R. C.  
Acting Adjutant.

POST OF COMMAND  
2ND BATTALION  
103RD FIELD ARTILLERY

June 26, 1918.

From: C. O. 2nd B'n 103rd F. A.

TO: C. O. 21st Engineers.

SUBJECT: Appreciation of assistance.

1. We take great pleasure in expressing to you our very deep appreciation of the assistance you have rendered us in many ways during the last three months. You have been always anxious to further our work, and your co-operation has greatly increased our ability and usefulness.

2. I wish particularly to thank Dispatcher George H. Sullivan, at Nauginsard, who at all times has made every effort to be of service.

3. Your assistance has both increased our mobility and made our stay very pleasant. I trust that we shall be able to work together elsewhere in the future.

(Signed) J. ALDEN TWACHTMNA,

Major, 103rd F. A.

A TRUE COPY:

Robert A. Radford,  
Captain, Engineers, U. S. A.,  
Adjutant.

HEADQUARTERS 21ST REGIMENT ENGINEERS,  
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES  
OFFICE ASSISTANT ENGINEER,  
LIGHT RAILWAY

November 3, 1918.

BULLETIN  
No. 5.

1. The following memorandum of commendation and appreciation is published for the information of the members of this command:

OFFICE OF CHIEF ENGINEER  
FIRST ARMY  
SECTION OF RAILWAYS

2 November, 1918.

MEMORANDUM TO LIEUT. COL. SLIFER:

"The Chief Engineer expresses his appreciation of the work done by the 60 c.m. forces under your jurisdiction and desire me to extend to you his appreciation of the services rendered. Keep it up! May I reiterate the remarks made by the Colonel."

E. D. PEEK,  
Colonel, Engineers, U. S. A.,  
Engineer of Army Railways.

2. Naturally it is the excellent work of the men in the regiment which actuates these expressions and I desire to extend my personal thanks and appreciation to each individual man of the command for the part he played.

3. Keep on going.

HIRAM J. SLIFER,  
Lieut. Colonel, Engineers, U. S. A.,  
Assistant Engineer, Light Railways.

HEADQUARTERS 21ST REGIMENT ENGINEERS  
(LIGHT RAILWAY), AMERICAN EX-  
PEDITIONARY FORCES

November 4, 1918.

MEMORANDUM NO. 118.

1. It is with a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction that the commanding officer announces that the regiment has received from the French League of Homes and Gardens, which is a national organization, its highest honor, the Diploma of the Gold Medal, for the 6th region. The following acknowledgment has been sent to the President of the League:

October 28, 1918.

President of the French League of Homes and Gardens.

Dear Sir: It is with much pleasure and gratification that I have received and hereby accept for the 21st Engineers (L. R.) the "Diploma de Medaille d'Or" of the French League of Homes and Gardens, which has been so courteously tendered the regiment. The diploma in itself and the spirit which has prompted its presentation are highly appreciated, not only as a recognition of our efforts, but as a concrete expression of the interest and

approval of the French Community and Society you represent.

It is such marks of courtesy and distinction as these, fostering and encouraging cordial relations between our respective peoples, that add the strength to our unity of mind and purpose which will eventually bring success.

May I thank you on behalf of myself and the regiment for the honor you have thus conferred upon us and the expression of good will signified in the presentation of this diploma, and at the same time permit me to express my appreciation of the kindly spirit and helpful co-operation displayed by your people during our service in the 6th Region of Sorey.

Very sincerely yours,

HIRAM J. SLIFER,

Lieut. Colonel, Engineers, U. S. A.

2. Great credit is due each man of the regiment for the enviable record which has been established for this command in the old area, of which this award is splendid evidence. The good impression created among the French people of this district cannot be over-estimated, not only from the viewpoint of the high estimation in which this regiment is held, but in a general way as an added distinction for the American forces in France.

3. My congratulations to the men of the regiment.

4. This memorandum will be posted on all company bulletin boards and will be read to the men at the first opportunity.

By order of Lieut. Colonel Slifer:

JAMES W. ANDERSON, JR.,

2nd Lieut. Engineers, U. S. A.,

Acting Adjutant.

HEADQUARTERS 21ST REGIMENT ENGINEERS  
(TRANS. CORPS), AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

November 27, 1918.

MEMORANDUM NO. 125.

1. The attention of all members of this command is invited to the following letter of commendation from Colonel George R. Spalding, Chief Engineer, First Army:

Headquarters First Army,

Office of Chief Engineer.

November 23, '18.

From: The Chief Engineer, First Army,

To: The Commanding Officer, 21st Engineers.

Subject: Service rendered during offensives.

1. The Chief Engineer desires to express his highest appreciation to you and to your regiment for the services rendered by you to the 1st Army in connection with the St. Mihiel Offensive, starting September 12th, and the offensive between the Meuse and the Argonne, starting September 26th, and the continuation of that offensive on November 1st.

2. The success of these offensives and the supply of the Army is largely due to the excellent work performed by your regiment and its attached troops.

3. A copy of this letter has been sent to the Chief of Staff, First Army.

4. It is desired that the terms of this letter be published to all the officers and enlisted men of your command at the earliest opportunity.

GEORGE R. SPALDING,

Colonel, Engineers, U. S. A.

2. The Regimental Commander desires to take this occasion again to commend the men of the regiment on the splendid spirit and the fortitude with which they performed the arduous work which has been encountered during service with the American E. F., and particularly during the offensives cited above. The excellent work of the 21st Engineers, which has called forth favorable comment on more than one occasion, is proof positive of the fine calibre of men of which this regiment is composed, and each man of the regiment may well feel proud of the part he has played in giving this enviable record which has been achieved by the consistent, persistent, co-operative work of the various units of the regiment.

3. The effort put forth has been well worth it, not so much for the record itself as for the part which the regiment has played in the reduction of the enemy to his present condition of enforced inactivity. However, the past, with its soixante trials and tribulations, lies behind us; there is standard gauge work ahead, for the standard gauge which comprises the 21st Engineers. There is still a duty to perform to the comrades who are in the enemy's country occupying enemy territory which has been wrested from his avaricious grasp at dear cost. Therefore let there be no relaxation of effort on our part nor of willingness to do for the period of service yet before us.

By order of Lt. Col. Slifer:

JAMES W. ANDERSON, JR.,

2nd Lieut. Engineers, U. S. A.

Acting Adjutant.

HEADQUARTERS 21ST REGIMENT TRANSPORTATION CORPS, AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

December 11, 1918.

MEMORANDUM NO. 128.

1. The following letter from Colonel E. D. Peek, Engineers, U. S. A., is quoted for the information of all concerned:

Headquarters, 21st Regiment Engineers (I. R.), American Expeditionary Forces, France.

November 19, 1918.

Officers and men of the 21st Engineers:

"The commanding officer, 21st Engineers, having been transferred from the regiment and appointed Chief Engineer, 1st Army, takes this opportunity to express to the officers and men of the 21st Engineers his deepest appreciation of the loyal support and faithful service rendered



by them during the formation of the regiment in the United States, and in all of the times of stress through which the regiment has passed since arriving in France nearly a year ago.

"It is with deepest personal regret that I realize that the ties which bound me so closely to the regiment must now be broken, but at such times orders from higher authority must be cheerfully accepted as coming from sources in a position to administer for the best interest of the service at large.

"However my interest in the welfare and success of the regiment will continue, and I trust that we may be engaged in work of a similar nature and in the same part of the country, so that I may be able to keep in touch with the affairs of the regiment.

"I will continue to look with pride upon the 21st Engineers as my old regiment, for it has without question made an enviable name for itself both in the St. Mihiel and Argonne-Meuse offensives.

"The success that the regiment has achieved and the name it has made for itself are due to the untiring effort and fine spirit shown by each individual officer and man of the organization and their co-operation as a whole, and I wish to thank each one of you for your loyal support, not only to myself and the regiment, but to the service in general."

E. D. PEEK.

Colonel, Engineers, U. S. A.,

Engineer of Army Railways.

2. This memorandum will be read to each company and detachment at the first formation after receipt of same.

By order of Lieut. Col. Slifer:

JAMES W. ANDERSON, JR.,

2nd Lieut., Engineers, U. S. A.,

Acting Adjutant.

OFFICE OF CHIEF ORDNANCE OFFICER A. E. F.,  
AMMUNITION FIELD HEADQUARTERS,  
SOUILLY

No. 272.

December 17, 1918.

Lt. Col. H. J. Slifer,

C. O., 21st Engr., L. R., Conflans.

I would not feel satisfied if I left unmentioned the service rendered by Company D, your regiment. It is gratifying to find that, regardless of the numerous difficulties under which they were compelled to operate, this company

succeeded in placing approximately 15,000 tons of ammunition into Montigny since November 11th. In addition to this, I have noticed considerable amount of other freight handled over this same line.

Let me congratulate you upon the fine spirit of this organization. I have always found them most willing to co-operate in every possible way, and their work has been most thorough and efficient.

H. H. STOUT,

Lt. Col. Ord. U. S. A.,

Field Amm. Officer, A. E. F.

AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER

May 19, 1919.

From: Chief Engineer, A. E. F.

To: Commanding Officer, 21st Engineers.

Subject: Letter of commendation.

1. Now that the activities of our army in France are drawing to a close and units are rapidly returning to the United States, it is my desire to place upon record and to make known to your command, my appreciation of their earnest efforts and notable accomplishments with the Expeditionary Forces in France.

2. The work of the 21st Engineers, which has been carried on for the most part in the zone of the armies both under the Chief Engineer, 1st Army, and the Director of Light Railways and Roads, was an important factor in the success of the American armies, particularly in the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne operations. The importance and absolute necessity of efficient light railway construction and operation in the successful accomplishment of an operation cannot be overestimated. The 21st Engineers has met all requirements in a highly satisfactory and commendable manner. The work of the regiment and the results accomplished should be a matter of personal pride to every member of your command.

3. I request that you publish this letter to your command, thus carrying to the officers and men a final word of commendation for their many sacrifices and loyal devotion to our cause.

W. C. LANGFITT,

Major General, U. S. A.

# Historical Staff

## TWENTY-FIRST ENGINEERS

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### Company A

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 Jones, John W., Pvt. 1st. Cl., Wallsville, Utah, Hospital.  
 King, Glen M., Pvt., R. F. D. No. 2, Ellenburg, Wash., 13th Engrs.  
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 Miller, Edgar F., Pvt., 1st. Cl., Altoona, Pa., D. L. R. & R.  
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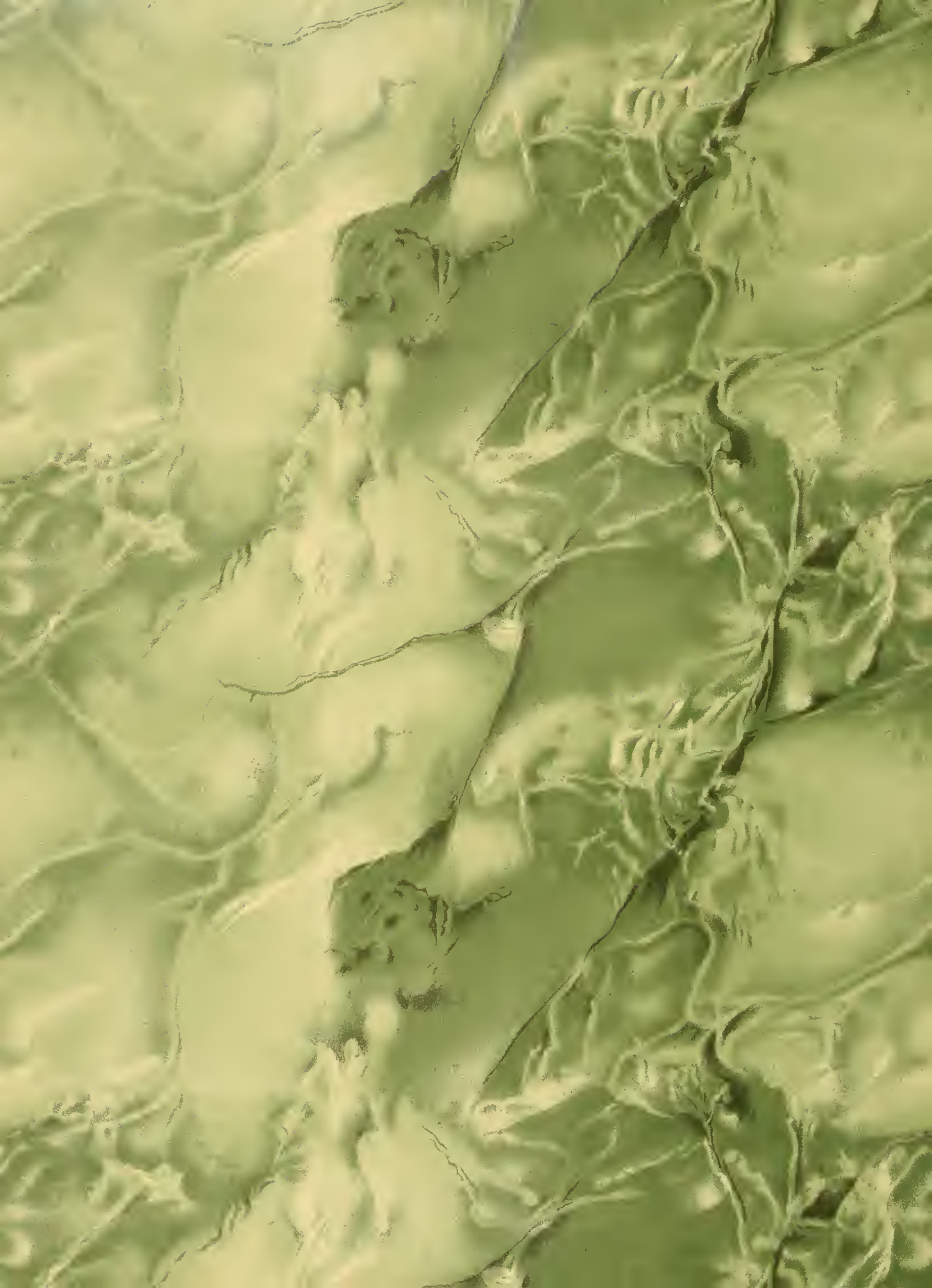


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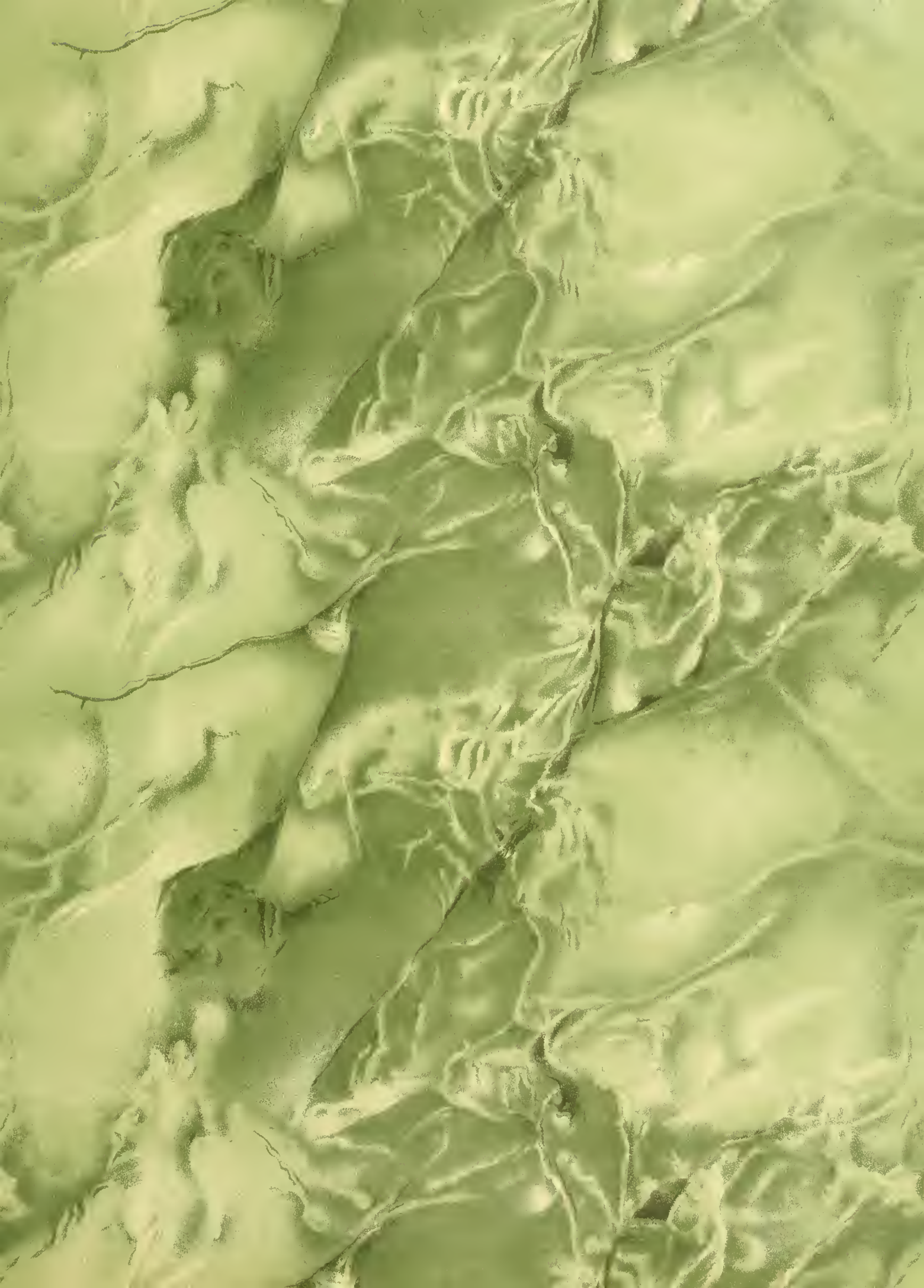
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